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Miriam Kaye.

The Two First Centuries of Florentine History

Printed by Lemercier Paris

THE MERCATO VECCHIO BEFORE ITS DEMOLITION

The Two First Centuries of Florentine History

THE REPUBLIC AND PARTIES AT THE TIME OF DANTE

BY

PROFESSOR PASQUALE VILLARI

TRANSLATED BY

LINDA VILLARI

ILLUSTRATED

London

T. FISHER UNWIN

PATERNOSTER SQUARE

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH VERSION.

BEFORE deciding to issue this translation I had first to reflect whether my Florentine studies could be of any use to the English public. Since Roscoe's day, English literature has been enriched by works of much importance on different phases of the political, literary, and artistic history of Florence. Both Napier and Trollope have bequeathed very complete narratives of Florentine events, and translations of notable foreign works have also been produced. But nearly all these works appeared before any scientific research as to the origin of the City and Commonwealth had begun, or, at least, before it had reached the results I have briefly expounded, and which deserve notice, not only on the score of intrinsic worth, but also because they throw new light on the subsequent history of Florence.

To attempt any new delineation of the special vicissitudes of the Florentine Republic, already so exhaustively and lucidly treated by other historians, would have been

outside my purpose. As stated in the preface to the Italian edition, my sole aim was to investigate in what manner the Republic was formed, the nature of its constitution, the why and wherefore of its continual transmutations, the first causes and genuine motives of the factions by which the city was torn, and likewise to ascertain how it came about that—despite all this turbulence and strife—commerce and industry, the fine arts and letters should have been able to achieve such marvellous results. Now, so far as I know, English literature contains nothing on this particular theme, although one that can scarcely fail to be of some use and interest even to readers familiar with greater works and more extended and detailed accounts of Florentine history.

These researches are not pursued beyond the times of Dante and Henry VII., inasmuch as that term actually marks the close of the period during which the Republic took shape and built up its constitution. This was followed by a new phase of equally high importance but very different character, during which the Republic entered, instead, on a course of decomposition. In fact, we have only to draw a comparison between the "Divine Comedy" and the "Decameron," to instantly perceive how deep was the change a few years had wrought in the spirit of Florence and of all Italy. These two works were almost contemporaneous, yet when reading them they seem to us the product of two entirely different ages. Whether in politics, religion, morals, or letters, the character of these two periods is seen to be essentially diverse. The Middle Ages, with all their rough primitive originality, have come to an end; classic learning and the Renaissance have begun. Touching this second

period, there is no scarcity of information, documents, or chroniclers, as in the case of the first. The historian is confronted by totally novel problems to which numerous modern writers have given their attention, and which have also been investigated in previous works of my own.

Even this second period would certainly afford matter for another work on the gradual course of political and moral dissolution, during which art and literature blossomed to new splendour. Such investigations, however, would transport me beyond the limits I have set to this book. Under what conditions and amid what difficulties these researches were begun and carried forward has been already plainly told in my preface to the Italian edition. It only remains for me to crave the indulgence of English readers.

PASQUALE VILLARI.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

A WORD of explanation is due to my readers touching the genesis of the present work.

In 1866 I began a course of lectures at our Istituto Superiore on the History of Florence, chiefly for the purpose of examining the political constitution of the Republic, and investigating the various transformations it had undergone during the long series of internal revolutions by which the city was harassed. In this way I hoped to ascertain the veritable causes of those revolutions, to discover some leading thread through the mazes of Florentine history, which even when treated by great writers has often been found exceedingly involved and obscure, and likewise to determine the most logical mode of arranging it in periods. Even a partial solution of these problems would have been of some use. I continued the lectures for a considerable time, but suspended them on reaching the period of Giano della Bella's "Decrees of Justice" (*Ordinamenti di Giustizia*), 1293. Some of these discourses were published in the Milan *Politecnico*, others in the *Nuova Antologia* at Florence. It was then my intention to collect them in a volume;

but after some hesitation I renounced the idea. It seemed indispensable to at least add some outline of the course of events subsequent to the fall of Giano della Bella and the exile of Dante, in order to conclude the first and most important period of the political history of Florence. Besides, I saw that the necessity of continuing these lectures on fixed days had not always allowed sufficient time for overcoming obstacles encountered by the way. Accordingly, more than a superficial revisal was required; gaps had to be filled in, certain pages re-written. Hence fresh researches were demanded, for which other labours granted no leisure at the moment.

Meanwhile new documents, new dissertations, and monographs on Florentine history were continually appearing, besides notable works on a larger scale such as those of Capponi, Del Lungo, Hartwig, Perrens, &c. All this increased the difficulty of revising and correcting lectures, now lapsing inevitably more and more out of date. On the other hand I sometimes found previous deductions confirmed by recently discovered documents, and that certain general ideas I had enounced were accepted and followed by writers of note. This naturally inclined me to be less severe in judging my work, and more disposed to listen to the tried friends who were urging its republication.

Being thus encouraged to resume my forsaken studies, I lectured in 1888 on the times of Henry VII. of Germany and the exile of Dante. Later on, in 1890, recognising that my previous work on the origins of the city and its commonwealth had become altogether inadequate since the appearance of so much new material, I returned to the subject in a fresh course of lectures, which likewise saw the light in the *Nuova Antologia*. Then, I finally began to put the scattered papers together to revise and correct them.

Hence it will be plainly seen that this book is composed of various separate parts which, although informed, one and all, by the same leading idea and treating of the same argument, were produced at distant intervals during a quarter of a century, in which the study of Florentine history had made rapid advance through the labours of numerous and competent writers. Therefore, in spite of devoting my best efforts to pruning, revising, and arranging my lectures, they are still old essays more or less disjointed, and containing many unavoidable repetitions. Greater organic unity could only have been attained by re-writing the whole and composing a new book ; whereas my intention was merely to republish a series of scattered compositions, under the fitting title of " Researches."

What finally decided me to reprint them was, that, as I venture to think, their dominant and fundamental notes still ring true, even after the numerous works produced by other hands. Indeed, unless I be mistaken, those works frequently support my observations, and confirm the ideas expressed throughout on the general character and progressive development of Florentine history. Whether I be right or wrong in this belief the reader must decide. At any rate I venture to hope that, in judging this book, he will kindly make allowance for the time and manner in which it came into existence.

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VARIOUS REMAINS DISCOVERED IN THE MERCATO VECCHIO OF FLORENCE.
(*Now in the Etruscan Museum.*)

INTRODUCTION.[1]

I.

THE history of Italian freedom, from the Middle Ages to the new series of foreign invasions, dating from the descent of Charles VIII. in 1494, mainly consists of the history of our communes. But this history is as yet unwritten, and, worse still, can never be written until the material required for the task shall have been brought to light, sifted, and illustrated. What were the most ancient political statutes, what those of the guilds of art and commerce, what the penal and civil laws, the individual conditions, revenue, expenditure, trade, and industry of those republics? To all these questions we can give but imperfect replies at the best, and some are left altogether unsolved. Yet until all are decided the civil history of our communes remains involved in obscurity.

Through Machiavelli and Giannone Italy gave the world the first essays in constitutional history, and by Muratori's gigantic labours inaugurated the great school of learning that is the only settled basis of modern and, more especially, of constitutional history. But we soon allowed the sceptre we had won to be snatched from our

[1] Originally published in the Milan *Politecnico*, March, 1866.

grasp. It is true that we have never experienced any dearth of great scholars or historians, but the complete national history of a people is a task exceeding the powers of one or of several individuals. Such history must be produced, as it were, by the nation itself. Only the combined efforts of many scholars and of many generations can succeed in co-ordinating and investigating the vast mass of material that has to be ransacked in order to trace through the vicissitudes of numerous municipalities, all differing from, and at war with one another, the history of the Italian people. It has been long the custom with us for every one to work independently: hence we lack the spirit of agreement and co-operation required to enable individual efforts to carry forward the work of the whole country at the same pace. Certainly, however, I must not forget to note the example of our various national historical societies, subsidised by the Government, and composed of most learned and deserving men. But these associations and commissions have as yet no general nor united plan of work; and, in fact, some of their members are apt to devote their energies to labours which, however important, are disconnected from the main object. Thus there will be much delay before our learned men complete the investigation of any one period of our history. Yet the rules which should be followed are not far to seek, since Italians were the first to discover them, and we still bear them in mind. Nor has the issue of highly important collections of documents been relegated exclusively to our societies and commissions. None can have forgotten the untiring labours of the worthy Vieusseux and his friends in their management of the "Archivio Storico Italiano"! To show what excellent results may be achieved by the publication of a single series of State papers, it is sufficient to mention the Despatches (*Relazioni*) of Venetian Ambassadors, given to the world by Alberi, and whereby not

only Italian but European history has been so greatly profited. What progress might not be made would all Italian scholars consent to devote their labours to a common end ! We have seen how much Professor Pertz was enabled to achieve at Berlin, with a subsidy from the Confederation, and aided by all the scholars of Germany. Truly, his " Monumenta " form an enduring memorial of the national history of the Fatherland, and has become the nucleus of a new school of scholars and historians.

Now that Italy is united, and her many states fused into one, she should know the history of her communes, and trace out the history of her people. It should also be kept in view that the Commune was the institution by whose means modern society was evolved from the Middle Ages. Rising in the midst of a throng of slaves, vassals, barons, marquises, dukes, the Commune gave birth to the *third estate* and the people which, after first destroying feudalism in Italy, subsequently by the French Revolution, destroyed it throughout Europe. Even Augustin Thierry notes that " thus was formed the immense congregation of free men who in 1789 undertook for all France that which had been achieved by their forefathers in mediæval municipalities." [1] Accordingly, since Italy was the centre and seat of municipal liberty, the purpose of the present work is not only to investigate our civil history, but to demonstrate how much we contributed to the discovery of the principles of modern society and civilisation. All careful students of the history of Roman law in the Middle Ages will have occasion to remark that our commentators while reviewing ancient jurisprudence, unconsciously modified it in adapting it to their own times. Francesco Forti has declared that no student of our statutes can fail to perceive that many of the regulations found in the Napoleon Code, and supposed to be created by the

[1] " Lettres sur l'hist. de France," close of Letter xxv.

French Revolution, already formed part of the old Italian law. I have come to the conclusion that in every branch of Italian civil life our history will be able to prove that the same remark holds good, inasmuch as our civil institutions contained the primary germs of modern freedom. But no one has yet dared to attempt this task, and, as I said before, no single strength could suffice for it. We have now to deal with a far humbler theme. By tracing in bold outline the history of a single commune, we desire to show what fresh researches remain to be made, and how many problems to be solved.

The vicissitudes of the Florentine Republic can only be paralleled with those of the most flourishing periods of Athenian freedom. Throughout modern history we might seek in vain the example of another city simultaneously so turbulent and prosperous, where, despite so much internecine carnage, fine arts, letters, commerce, and industry, all flourished equally. The historian almost doubts his own veracity when bound to recount how a handful of men settled on a small spot of earth, extended their trade to the East and the West; establishing banks throughout Europe; and accumulated such vast wealth, that private fortunes sometimes sufficed to support tottering thrones. He has also to relate how these rich merchants founded modern poetry with their Dante, painting with their Giotto; how with the aid of their Arnolfo and Brunellesco, and of their Michelangelo, who was poet, painter, sculptor, and architect in one, they raised the stupendous buildings which the world will lastingly admire. The first and subtlest of European diplomatists were Florentines; political science and civil history were born in Florence with Machiavelli. Towards the end of the Middle Ages this narrow township seems a small point of fire shedding light over the whole world.

It might well be thought that all difficulties regarding

the history of this commune must have been already overcome, seeing that the finest Italian writers, the greatest modern historians, have for so long made it the theme of extended labours. In fact, what other city can boast annals penned by such men as Villani, Compagni, Machiavelli, Guicciardini, Nardi, Varchi? And, in addition to histories and chronicles, we find an endless string of Diaries, *Prioristi* (Notebooks), Reminiscences, before coming down to modern writers. Among the Florentines it was a very common practice to keep a daily register of events, and in this wise their splendid store of historic literature was continually enlarged. But, nevertheless, no history bristles with so many difficulties as that of Florence, nor offers so many apparently insurmountable contradictions. Events pass before our eyes, well described, vividly coloured; they flit past in a rapid and uninterrupted whirl, never resting, subject to no law, and seemingly obedient to chance alone. Personal hatred, jealousy, and private revenge produce political revolutions, drenching the city with the blood of its children. These revolutions endure for months, perhaps even for years, and end with arbitrary decrees, which are violated or undone the moment they have received magisterial sanction. Thus we are often moved to inquire, How can this be the work of far-seeing diplomats, of great politicians? Either lofty commendations for political good sense and acuteness were falsely lavished on men incapable of giving their country sound laws and stable institutions, and who in the gravest affairs of State were solely influenced by personal loves and hates; or else for centuries past we have accorded unmerited praise to the historians who have described impossible events to us in the most vivid colours. In fact, how could it possibly be that so much good sense should breed so much disorder? How, too, in the midst of this disorder, with the vessel of the State

at the mercy of every wind that blew, could art, science, and literature give forth so glorious a harvest?

Undoubtedly history, as we interpret it to-day, was unknown to the ancients. We seek the causes of events, whereas they merely described them. We wish to know the laws, manners, ideas, and prejudices of mankind, whereas our forefathers were exclusively concerned with human passions and actions. In the fifteenth century political science was chiefly a study of human nature, while at this day it is mainly a study of institutions. Modern history aims at the examination of mankind and society in every form, and from every point of view. That is why we have had to so often re-fashion the work that, nevertheless, had been splendidly performed by writers of old.

Leaving aside all compilers of those fables and legends on the origin of Florence found repeated in even later works, Florentine historians may be divided into two great schools. First come the authors of Chronicles or Diaries, who flourished chiefly in the fourteenth century, although they continued long after that period. These writers record day by day the events they have witnessed and in which they have often taken part; stirred by the very passions they describe, they sometimes rise to eloquence, and the heat of their own words leaves them no time to dwell on abstract ideas. They presuppose in their readers their own detailed knowledge of the political institutions among which their lives were spent, but which are unknown to us, and the object of our keenest desire. Frequently, however, some fourteenth-century chronicler, such as Giovanni Villani, with his incomparable gift of observation, supplies such minute descriptions of events, reports so many details, that, almost unawares, we find ourselves carried back to his day. Sometimes, when descending to particulars, he apologises for detaining the

reader on topics of small moment, little foreseeing what value we later generations would attach to all those details of the trade, instruction, revenue, and expenditure of the Republic, or how we should long for more facts of the same kind. But as soon as these writers touch upon times and events outside their own experience, they have either to copy verbatim from other chroniclers, or their narratives remain cold, colourless, and devoid of merit or authority. We pass at once from the most lively and graphic descriptions to the strangest fables, the greatest incoherence, since these men are incapable of using any discernment even in copying literally from others. Proofs of this are seen in their puerile accounts of the foundation of Florence. Historical criticism was as yet unborn.

The scholarship of the fifteenth century gave rise to the study and imitation of Sallust and Livy ; and Italian writers were no longer content to register facts from day to day, unconnectedly and without order. Many wrote in Latin, others in Italian ; but all sought to compose historical narratives in a more artistic, or at all events, more artificial way. They launched into exordiums and general considerations ; gave lengthy descriptions, eked out by many flights of fancy, of wars they had never witnessed, and of which they knew little or nothing ; they attributed imaginary speeches to their personages, and sometimes fashioned their narratives in the shape of dialogues, to increase the distance between themselves and their fourteenth-century predecessors.[1]

It was a period of rhetorical essays and servile imitations of the classics, during which Italian history and literature declined, although preparing for revival in the coming age. In fact, we find the art of history notably

[1] See, for example, Goro Dati's "Storia di Firenze."

advanced in the sixteenth century. Machiavelli, who may be styled the most illustrious founder of that art, begins with a word of blame to preceding historians exactly because "they had said little or nothing of civil discords, or of existing internal enmities and their effects, and described other matters with a brevity that could be neither useful nor pleasing to the reader." Indirectly, these words serve as a faithful portrait of the book that has proved the most lasting monument to his own fame. He inquires into the causes of events, the origin of all the parties and revolutions of the Republic; thus creating a new method and opening a new road. He reduces the whole history of the Commonwealth into an admirable unity; he rejects with profound contempt the fabulous tales bequeathed by the chronicler regarding the foundation of Florence, and throws an eagle glance on party manœuvres from their origin down to his own day. He was the first to undertake these researches, and, notwithstanding all newer investigations, his fundamental idea maintains its value.

But Machiavelli gave little heed to institutions, scarcely any at all to laws and customs. Furthermore, he was so entirely guided by his instinct of divination as to care little for the historic exactitude of particular facts. To ascertain the infinite number of inaccuracies and blunders contained in his book, and which would be unpardonable in a modern writer, his narrative must be compared with the contemporary accounts of the old chroniclers, some of which were known to him. Not only are there frequent errors of date, but also of the names and number of magistrates and of the framework of institutions. It would seem that while divining the spirit of events, he simultaneously remoulded them according to his own fancy. Sometimes we find him appropriating entire pages from Cavalcanti's history, even transcribing the fictitious

speeches attributed by that chronicler to historic characters, and by a few touches of his own pouring new life into the dull narrative without troubling to undertake any fresh research. Thus, his book, although a valuable guide, is also an unsafe one. He cannot always abstain from transplanting a true fact to the place best suited to his own theories, thus filling up inconvenient gaps without many scruples of conscience. His aim, so he tells us, was to investigate the causes of parties and revolutions. What is now designated as local colour—*i.e.*, the historic colour of facts—is entirely absent from his narrative, and particularly from that of the earlier days of the Republic. Men adhere to different factions, sometimes commit evil, sometimes generous deeds, but are apparently always the same in his eyes. To what extent the clear appreciation of events is hampered by this theory may easily be imagined. Then, too, as Machiavelli draws nearer to his own times, he sees the constitution of the Republic changing and decaying, freedom disappearing, and a thousand personal passions arising to hasten the overthrow of enfeebled institutions. A knowledge of minute particulars would be doubly desirable at this period to make us understand the social revolution in question ; but Machiavelli, though always a fifteenth-century Florentine, never lost sight of the example of Titus Livy and other Roman writers, and consequently, like all the scholars of his age, was inspired with a lofty contempt for any small details apt to endanger the epic unity of historic narrative. Then, later on, in approaching the distinct domination of the Medici, under whose rule he was living, he turns aside with ill-concealed disgust from the internal vicissitudes of the Republic and gives his whole attention to external events. He then discourses of warfare and of the Italian policy that was the passion of his life. In the midst of court intrigues and the contested predominance of this or

that party, we find him chiefly concerned in ascertaining how a new prince might best reunite the scattered members of his torn and oppressed motherland; and note that this noble design frequently makes him forget the history of Florence.

In reading old chronicles of contemporary events, we see before our eyes the living, speaking figures of Giano della Bella, Farinata degli Uberti, Corso Donati, and Michele di Lando. Their feelings, loves, and hates are known and almost familiar to us; but we are plunged in a restless, unrestrained tumult of passions, without knowing whence blows the blast driving men and things onward in a whirl of confusion, without one moment's truce. No sooner do we pass beyond the visual horizon of the writer, than all images become confused, and our sight is no less obscured than his own. Even at moments of most eloquent description we hear of institutions and magistrates conveying no meaning to our ears, and often see these change, disappear, and return without grasping the why and wherefore. But when, on the other hand, by the study and imitation of ancient authors, the art of embracing a vaster circle of facts springs into being, and the causes and relations of those facts are investigated in order to weld them into visible unity, historic criticism is still lacking to verify events, to examine and define laws and institutions, to colour and almost revive the past in all its varied and changeful aspects. The genius of the historian emits, as it were, flashes of light; but these, while illuminating some occasional point, only leave a confused and uncertain view of past ages in our mind. We require to know men and institutions, parties and laws, as they really were; nor is this enough: we must also comprehend how all these elements were fused into unity, and how laws and institutions were begotten by those men in those times.

This was the task modern writers should have performed, but many reasons have prevented its completion. First of all, the progress achieved by art and literature while liberty was perishing in Florence, and their great influence on all modern culture, fixed the principal attention of writers on this section of Florentine history as being one of very general importance, and more easily intelligible to all. Accordingly, the greater number of modern, and especially of foreign students neither examined nor understood the precise period in which all the noblest qualities of the Florentine nature had been formed, and during which were evolved and trained the intellectual powers afterwards expressed in art and letters to the admiration of the whole world. Many foreigners seemed to believe that art and letters had not only flourished when manners were most corrupt, but were almost the result of and identified with the corruption that led to their decline. For the fine arts, being the offspring of liberty and morality, could not long survive their parent forces.

It should be also observed that no great modern writer has yet produced any work specially devoted to the political and constitutional history of Florence.[1] It must be confessed that more than by any modern pen was achieved to this effect by the elder and younger Ammirato, who, although writers of the seventeenth century, already began to ransack State papers, and composed a work that was new and remarkable at that period. But they neither proposed to write a history

[1] Since this paper first appeared many important researches have been made on the origin of Florence and its Commune, particularly by Professor D. O. Hartwig, of whose estimable work we shall speak later on. Several general histories of Florence have also been published, of which the more noteworthy are the "Storia della Repubblica di Firenze," by the Marquis Gino Capponi (Florence, Barbera, 1875, 2 vols.), and "L'Histoire de Florence," by Mons. Perrens (Paris, 1877–90, 9 vols.), both to be mentioned farther on.

of the Florentine constitution, nor possessed sufficient critical equipment for the purpose, had they sought to fulfil it. They often overload new and valuable information regarding events, and even institutions, with a mass of useless detail, destructive to the general unity of their narrative.

It is scarcely requisite to add that modern writers, only treating of Florence in general histories of Italy, were necessarily compelled to pass briefly over secondary parts of their work. They often relied too blindly on old authors of acknowledged repute and influence, without using enough discrimination in sifting material of undeniable value from other parts composed of second-hand narratives and repetitions of fabulous tales. We have only to compare Villani with Malespini to see that one of the two undoubtedly copied many chapters from the other.[1] Nor is this a solitary example. As we have before remarked, Machiavelli borrowed whole chapters from Cavalcanti;[2] Guicciardini often translated from Galeazzo Capra, better known under the name of Capella;[3] Nardi reproduced Buonaccorsi verbatim.

[1] At the time when this sentence was written Malespini was held to be anterior to Villani, and the latter his plagiarist. Later, the contrary was proved by Scheffer-Boichorst, many of whose arguments admit of no reply. But Marchese G. Capponi refused to be convinced, on the strength of certain indications establishing, as he thought, that Malespini had written at an earlier date than Villani. Later again the diligent researches begun by Professor Lami confirmed the fact that Malespini's work is a compilation, chiefly, from Villani, and perhaps, though only here and there, from some other chronicler of possibly earlier date. The latter hypothesis would explain the deductions of Gino Capponi.

[2] Published in Florence, 1838, 2 vols., at "The Sign of Dante" printing office. See also Gervinus, "Geschichte der florentinischen Historiographie." Frankfurt, 1833.

[3] Capellæ, "Commentarii," of which eleven editions appeared between 1531 and 1542. Ranke, "Zur Kritik neurer Geschichtschreiber." I may now add that in my opinion Ranke was exaggeratedly hostile to Guicciardini, whose historic merits are proved by documentary evidence. *Vide* my work on Machiavelli, end of vol. iii.

Therefore, without critical examination of these writers, and careful decision as to their relative value and the confidence to be accorded to different parts of their works, it is uncommonly easy to be misled. For this, and many other reasons, modern historians of Italy encounter numerous pitfalls when treating of Florentine matters. Now and then we see them halting, in common with chroniclers of the widest renown, to define the precise functions of the Captain of the people, or Podesta, or Council of the Commune, and afterwards finding it extremely difficult to make their definitions agree with actual facts whenever those titles recur in their pages. Such mistakes nearly always proceed from a double source. The definitions supplied by old writers regarding magistrates and their functions were extremely slight, when they alluded to their own times, and often inexact where other periods were in question. Also, modern writers generally demand a precise and fixed definition of institutions which were subject to change from the day of their birth, and unalterable only in name. The name not only remains intact after the institution has become entirely different from what it was at first, but often long outlives the institution itself. It is curious to see what ingenious theories are then started to give substance and reality to names now become ghosts of a vanished past. The only way to thread this labyrinth is by endeavouring to reconstruct the series of radical changes every one of those institutions underwent, and without once losing sight of the mutual relations preserved between them during the continual vicissitudes to which they are subject. Only by seeking the law that regulates and dominates these changes is it possible to discern the general idea of the Republic and determine the value of its institutions.

But what can be done while we lack so many of the

elements most needed for the completion of this task? The learned have yet to arrange, examine, and illustrate the endless series of provisions, statutes, *consulte*, *pratiche*, ambassadorial reports, and, in short, of all the State papers of the Republic, many of which are still unsought and undiscovered. Nevertheless, we believe that, without attempting for the present any complete history of Florence, some rather useful work may be performed. We may certainly follow the guidance of old chroniclers and historians regarding events of which they had ocular testimony, trying, when needed, to temper their party spirit by confronting them with writers of an opposite faction. Vast numbers of documents have been published in driblets, and many learned dissertations, although the series is still incomplete; besides, one may easily resort to the Florence archives in order to vanquish difficulties and bridge the principal gaps. And after undertaking researches of this kind, it seems easy to us to clearly prove how the whole history of Florence may be illumined by a new light, and its apparent disorder made to disappear. In fact, as soon as one begins to carefully examine the veritable first causes underlying the apparent, and often, fallacious causes of political revolutions in Florence, these revolutions will be found to follow one another in a marvellously logical sequence. Then in the wildest chaos we seem rapidly able to discern a mathematical succession and connection of causes and effects. Personal hatreds and jealousies are not causes, but only opportunities serving to accelerate the fast and feverish sequence of reforms by which the Florentine Commune, after trying by turns every political constitution possible at the time, gradually attained to the highest liberty compatible with the Middle Ages. It is this noble aim, this largeness of freedom, that rouses all the intellectual and moral force contained in the Republic, evolves its admir-

able political acumen, and allows letters and art and science to put forth such splendid flowers in the midst of apparent disorder. But when strictly personal passions and hatreds prevail, then real chaos begins, the constitution becomes corrupt, and the downfall of freedom is at hand.

The sole aim of the present work is to offer a brief sketch of the history of Florence during the foundation of its liberties. So great is the importance of the theme that the historian Thiers has given long attention to it, and we know that an illustrious Italian has already made it the object of many years of strenuous research.[1]

II.

The history of every Italian republic may be divided into two chief periods: the origin of the commune, the development of its constitution and its liberties. In the first period, during which an old state of society is decaying and a new one arising, it is hard to distinguish the history of any one commune from that of the rest, inasmuch as it treats of Goths, Longobards, Greeks, and Franks, who dominate the greater part of Italy in turn, reducing the country, almost throughout its extent, to identical conditions. The position of conquerors and of conquered is everywhere the same, only altered by change of rulers. Amid the obscurity of the times and scarcity of information, there seems scarcely any difference between one Italian city and another. But differences are more clearly defined, and become increasingly prominent after the first arisal of freedom. Most obscure, though not of earliest date, was perhaps the origin of Florence, which

[1] Here allusion is made to Capponi's "History," which was still unpublished at the time.

tarried long before beginning to rise to importance. Our present purpose being merely to throw light on the history of the Florentine Constitution, we need not devote many words to the first period mentioned above—namely, of the origin of Italian communes in general. At one time this question was the theme of a learned, lengthy, and most lively dispute, chiefly carried on by Italian and German writers. But the scientific severity of researches, in which Italian scholars won much honour, was often impaired by patriotism and national prejudice. It being recognised that the origin of the Commune was likewise the origin of modern liberty and society, the problem was tacitly transformed into another question—*i.e.*, whether Italians or Germans were the first founders of these liberties, this society? It is easy to understand how political feelings were then imported into the controversy, and effectually removed it from the ground of tranquil debate.

Towards the end of the last century the question was often discussed in Italy by learned men of different views, such as Giannone, Maffei, Sigonio, Pagnoncelli, &c. Muratori, though lacking any prearranged system, threw powerful flashes of light on the subject, and raised it to higher regions by force of his stupendous learning. But the dispute did not become heated until Savigny took up the theme in his renowned "History of Roman Law in the Middle Ages." In endeavouring to prove the uninterrupted continuity of the said jurisprudence, he was obliged —inasmuch as all historical events are more or less connected together—to maintain that the Italians, when subject to barbarian and even to Longobard rule, lost neither all their personal liberty nor their ancient rights, and that the Roman Commune was never completely destroyed. Accordingly, the revival of our republics and of Roman law was no more than a renewal of old institutions and

laws which had never entirely disappeared. Germany was quick to see to what conclusions the ideas of our great historian tended, and thereupon Eichorn, Leo, Bethmann, Karl Hegel, and others, rose up in arms against the theory of the Italian Commune being of Roman birth. They maintained, on the contrary, that the barbarians, and more especially the Longobards, whose domination was harsher and more prolonged than the rest, had stripped us of all liberty, destroyed every vestige of Roman institutions, and that, consequently, the new communes and their statutes were of new creation, and originally derived from Germanic tribes alone.

To all appearance these views should have stirred Italian patriotism to furious opposition, and made Savigny's ideas universally popular among us. Yet this was not the case. We supplied many learned adherents to either side. At that time our national feeling had just awakened ; we already desired—nay, claimed—a united Italy, no matter at what cost, and detested everything that seemed opposed to our unity. Well, the Longobards had been on the point of mastering the whole of Italy, and the Papacy alone had been able to arrest their conquests by securing the aid of the Franks. But for this, even the Italy of the ninth or tenth century might have become as united a country as France. Already the school of thinkers had been revived among us that, even in Machiavelli's day, had regarded the Pope as the fatal cause of Italy's divisions. Therefore, naturally enough, while confuting Savigny's views, our nineteenth-century Ghibellines exalted the Longobards, ventured to praise their goodness and humanity, and hurled invectives against the Papacy for having prevented their general and permanent conquest of Italy. But, on the other hand, there was also a political school that looked to the Pope as the future saviour of Italy, and this school, prevailing later on during

the revolution of 1848, adopted the opposite theory, and possessed two most illustrious representatives in Manzoni and Carlo Troya. At any rate, they had little difficulty in proving that barbarians had been invariably barbaric, killing, destroying, and trampling down all things, and that the Papacy, by summoning the Franks, no matter for what end, had certainly rendered some help to the harshly oppressed masses. The Franks, in fact, gave some relief to the Latin population, sanctioned the use of Roman law and granted new powers to Popes and bishops, who undoubtedly contributed to the revival of the communes. Thus, although for opposite ends, identical opinions were maintained on both sides of the Alps. Throughout this controversy learning was always subordinated to political aims, although the disputants may not have been always aware of it; and historic truth and serenity consequently suffered unavoidable hurt. Balbo, Capponi, and Capei, after throwing their weight on this side or that, ended by holding very temperate views, and their teachings cast much light on the point at issue.

The main difficulty proceeds from the fact that few persons are willing to believe that in the Middle Ages, as well as throughout modern history, we can always trace the continuous reciprocal action of the Latin and German races, and that it is impossible to award the merit of any of the chief political, social, or literary revolutions exclusively to either. On the contrary, wherever the absolute predominance of one of the two races seems most undoubted, we have to tread with most caution, and seek to discover what share of the work was due to the other. Likewise, in order to justly weigh and determine their reciprocal rights in history, impartial narrative would have a better chance of success than any system based on political ideas. Assuredly, when facts are once thoroughly

verified, no system is needed, since general ideas result naturally from facts. Were it allowable to introduce here a comparison with far younger times, we might remark that when French literature invaded Germany in the eighteenth century it obtained general imitation there, and unexpectedly led to the revival of national German literature. In order to glorify the national tone of this literature, would it be necessary to maintain that the great previous diffusion of French writings was only imagined by historians? Later, the French flag was flaunted in nearly every city of Germany, and the people humiliated and crushed. From that moment we see the national German spirit springing to vigorous life. Must we say that this revival was due to the French? Is it not better to describe events as they occurred, rejecting all foregone conclusions? I am quite aware of the abyss between these recent events and those of old days; but, nevertheless, I consider that Balbo was right in remarking that the fact of the origin of the communes being disputed at such length and with so much heat and learning by the two rival schools, proved that the truth was not confined exclusively to either. Accordingly, we will rapidly sum up the conclusions we deem the most reasonable.

Every one knows that, after the earlier barbarian descents, by which the Empire was devastated, and Rome itself frequently ravaged, Italy endured five real and thorough invasions. Odoacer, with his mercenary horde, composed of men of different tribes, but generally designated as Heruli, was the leader who dealt the mortal blow in 476, and becoming master of Italy for more than ten years, scarcely attempted to govern it, and only seized a third of the soil. But a new host poured in from the banks of the Danube, commonly styled Goths, and subdivided into Visigoths and Ostrogoths. The former

division, commanded by Alaric, had already besieged and sacked Rome; the latter, led by Theodoric, appeared in 489, and speedily subjected all Italy. Theodoric's reign was highly praised. The chiefs of these early barbarian tribes had often served for many years in Roman legions, and had sometimes been educated in Rome. Accordingly they felt a genuine admiration for the majesty of the very empire that the heat of victory now urged them to destroy. Theodoric organised the government; and, according to the barbarian custom, seized a third of the land for his men; but he left the Romans their laws and their magistrates. In every province a count was at the head of the government, and held jurisdiction over the Ostrogoths. The Romans were ruled according to their own laws, and these laws administered by a mixed tribunal of both races. But Theodoric's government became gradually harsher and more intolerable to the Romans, so that, after his death, they revolted against his successors, and invoked the aid of the Greeks of the Eastern Empire. But revolt brought them nothing save increased suffering, inasmuch as the Goths began to murder the Romans in self-defence, deprived them of what liberty and institutions they had been allowed to retain, and organised a military and absolute government. This was the government Belisarius and Narses found established on coming from Constantinople to deliver and reconquer Italy; this wa the government they copied with their dukes, or *duces*. The Ostrogoths had ruled Italy for fifty-nine years (493–552), and the Greeks held it for sixteen more (552–568). Theirs also was a purely martial government, under the General-in-chief Narses, but with dukes, tribunes, and inferior judges nominated by the Empire. As usual, the newcomers appropriated a share of the soil, and probably this share now went to the

State. Their tyranny was different from that of the barbarians, but it was the tyranny of corrupt rulers, and therefore more cruel. The Greeks had expelled the Goths, and next came the Longobards to drive out the Greeks. They gradually extended their conquests, and in fifteen years became masters of three-fourths of Italy, leaving only a few strips of land, mainly near the sea, to the Greeks, whom they never succeeded in expelling altogether. The Longobards struck deep roots in Italian soil, and dwelt on it for more than two hundred years (568–773), ruling in a very harsh and tyrannous fashion. They took a third of the land, reduced the Italians almost to slavery, and respected neither Roman laws nor Roman institutions. Beneath their sway the ancient civilisation seemed annihilated, and the germs of a newer one were prepared, although its first budding forth is still involved in much obscurity. Every controversy as to the origin of our communes started from inquiries into the condition of the Italians under the Longobard rule. If ancient tradition were at any time really broken off and replaced by a totally new one, it must have occurred under that rule. Or, if it only underwent a great change before assuming new life and vigour at a later time, the process must have dated from the same period.

Nevertheless, wherever the Byzantine domination had obtained, a feebler and more vacillating government weighed less cruelly on the people ; therefore, as early as the seventh and eighth centuries, certain cities were seen to develope new life. The Commune speedily took shape, even in Rome, where the power of the Papacy, hostile to the Longobards, had greatly increased. On first coming among us of the Arian creed, these barbarians respected neither the Catholic bishops, the minor clergy, nor anything sacred or profane, and later on menaced the Eternal City itself. Accordingly, as a means of defence against

the threatening enemy at his gates, the Pontiff summoned the Franks to save the Church and country from oppression. They came in obedience to this call, led first by Pepin and then by Charlemagne, who, driving out the Longobards, and fortifying the Papacy by grants of land, enabled the Pope to inaugurate his temporal dominion. In reward for this Charlemagne was crowned emperor; and thus the ancient Empire of the West was re-established by the new Empire of the Franks, to which the Holy Roman-Germanic Empire afterwards succeeded.

Thereupon the dissolution of barbarian institutions, already begun in Italy, proceeded at a more rapid pace. There was a ferment in Italian public life, heralding the approach of a new era. Institutions, usages, laws, traditions of all kinds—Longobard, Greek, Frankish, ecclesiastical, Roman—were found side by side and jumbled together. Next ensued a prolonged term of violence and turmoil, during which the name of Italy was scarcely heard. All old and new institutions seem at war, all struggling in vain for supremacy, when suddenly the Commune arises to solve the problem, and the era of freedom begins. But what gave birth to the Commune? This is the question by which we are always confronted.

It would be outside our present purpose to follow the learned scholars who have sought to deduce ingenious and complicated theories from some doubtful phrase in an old codex, or the vague words of some chronicler. It is certain that the Roman Empire was an aggregation of municipalities exercising self-government. The city was the primitive atom, the germ-cell, as it may be called, of the great Roman society that began to disperse when the capital lost the power of attraction required to bind together so great a number of cities separated by vast tracts of country either totally deserted, or only inhabited by the slaves cultivating the soil. The barbarians, on the

other hand, knew nothing of citizen life, and the *Gau* or *Comitatus* (whence the term *contado* is derived), only comprising embryo towns, or rather villages, which were sometimes burnt when the tribes moved on elsewhere, resembled the primitive nucleus of Teutonic society. In the *comitatus* the count ruled and administered justice with his magistrates; the chiefs of the soldiery were his subordinates, and became barons later on. Several countships joined together formed the dukedoms or marquisates into which Italy was then divided, and the whole of the invading nation was commanded by a king elected by the people.

When, therefore, the Germanic tribes held sway over the Latin, the *Gau* held sway over the cities which indeed formed its constituents. And the counts, as military chieftains, ruled the conquered land, of which the victors appropriated one-third. The Goths pursued the same plan; so too the Greeks, who replaced all counts by their own *duces*; and so also the Longobards. Only the latter's rule was far more tyrannous, especially at first, and their history is very obscure. They began by slaughtering the richest and most powerful Romans; they seized one-third of the revenues, it would seem, instead of the lands, thus leaving the oppressed masses without any free property, and consequently in a worse condition than before. The Goths had permitted the Romans to live in their own way, but the Longobards respected no laws, rights, nor institutions of the vanquished race. On this head Manzoni remarks [1] that no mention is found of any Italian personage, whether actual or imaginary, in connec tion with any royal office or public act of the time. Nevertheless, from absolute tyranny, and even downright subjection, to the total destroyal of every Roman law, right, and institution, there is a long step. In order to

[1] *Vide* "Discorso Storico," chap. i.

certain that the Longobards, having need of administrators, builders, and artisans, were obliged to make use of Romans and their superior skill in those capacities. It was in this way that the ancient *scholae*, or associations of craftsmen, continued to survive throughout the Middle Ages, as we know to have been the case with the *magistri comacini*, or Guild of Como Masons, to whose skill the conquering race had frequent recourse. In however rough and disorderly a fashion these associations contrived to withstand the barbarian impact, they were certainly an element of the old civilisation, and kept the thread of it unbroken. Other remains and traditions of that same civilisation also clung about them; and when every other form of government or protecting force was lacking to the inhabitants of cities, these associations guarded the public welfare to some extent. Do we not find that an ancient municipality, when first left to its own resources, sometimes closed the city gates against the barbarians, and defended itself, almost after the manner of an independent state? Was it not sometimes successful in repulsing the foe? Even when conquered, trampled, and crushed, can we suppose it to have been destroyed everywhere alike, or so thoroughly cancelled from the memory of the Latins, that, on seeing it reappear, we must attribute its resurrection to Germanic tribes, to whom all idea of a city was unknown until they had invaded our soil? Did not the resuscitation of the Greek cities of Southern Italy begin as far back as the seventh and eighth centuries—namely, in the time of the Longobards—and assuredly without the help of Germanic traditions? Did not the Roman Commune arise at the same period? And if the ancient municipalities, fallen beneath the Longobard yoke, and therefore more cruelly oppressed, delayed almost four centuries longer, did they not also follow the example of their fellow-cities at last? What is the

meaning of the widely spread tradition, that only in that paragon of independent, free republics, Byzantine Amalfi, were preserved the Roman Pandects, which were then captured by Pisa, and cherished as her most valued treasure? Does not the whole subsequent history of the Commune consist of the continual struggle of the re-born Latin race against the descendants of Teuton hordes? If Latin civilisation had been utterly destroyed, how came it that the dead could rise again to combat the living? Therefore, it seems clear to us that, although the Longobards accorded no legal rights to the conquered people, they could not practically deprive them of all; they either tolerated or were unaware of many things, and the tradition, usage, and persistence of the race kept alive some remnants of Latin civilisation. Thus alone can it be explained how, after enduring a harsh and long-continued tyranny that apparently destroyed everything, no sooner were a few links snapped off the strong, barbaric chain, by which the Italian population was so straitly bound, than Latin institutions sprang to new life, and regained all the ground they had lost.

Barbarian society, both in form and tendency, was essentially different from the Latin. Its predominant characteristic was the so-called Germanic individualism, as opposed to the Latin sociability. We note a prevalent tendency to divide into distinct and separate groups. As a body, it no sooner lost the force of cohesion and union induced by the progress and rush of conquest, than it immediately began to be scattered and disintegrated. Owing to their nomadic and savage life, as well as to the blood in their veins, the barbarians seemed to have inherited an exaggerated personality and independence, making it difficult for them to submit for long to a common authority. Thus, when peace was established, germs of enfeebling discord soon appeared among them.

In fact, when the Longobards had completed the conquest of nearly the whole of Italy, they divided the land into thirty-six Duchies, governed by independent dukes enjoying absolute rule in their respective territories. Under the dukes were sometimes counts, residing in cities of secondary importance, and at the head of the *comitati;* while still smaller cities were often ruled by a *sculdascius*, or bailiff. Both dukes and bailies administered justice according to the Longobard code, together with the assistant judges, who, under the Franks, developed into *scabini*, or sheriffs. Little by little military leaders gained possession of the strongholds, and subsequently became almost independent chiefs. Then, too, the royal officials, styled *gasindi*, likewise exercised great power. And even as the dukes finally asserted their independence from the king, so counts and *sculdasci* sought emancipation from the ducal sway, although without immediate success. In the first century, after the conquest, there was no law, no recognised protection for the vanquished, nor was the authority of the bishops and clergy in any way respected. The history of the Longobard rule shows it to have been so tremendously oppressive as to apparently crush the very life of the people, so that even at the most favourable moments no serious revolts were attempted. Even the example of the free cities in the South failed to excite them.

Nevertheless, as we have already noted, the Church, having gained meanwhile a great increase of power, refused to tolerate the pride and arrogance of barbarians who showed her so little respect. Hence the Pope resolved to expel these strangers by the help of others, and called the Franks into Italy. Charlemagne, the founder of the new Empire, could not regard the Latins, to whom the growing civilisation of his states was so much indebted, with the inextinguishable barbarian contempt felt by the Longobards. He sought to extend his

conquests and his power. He wished to assist the Pope, in order to be consecrated by him and obtain his moral support. Therefore he came to Italy, and the already disintegrated Longobards could ill withstand the firm unity of the Franks, strengthened as it was by the prestige of his own victories. In vain the Longobards had already chosen and sworn fealty to another monarch ; in vain they prepared for defence. After two hundred and five years of assured and almost unchecked domination, their kingdom was overthrown for ever. In 774 Charlemagne became master of Italy, and in the year 800 was crowned emperor by the Pope in Rome. Thus the Western Empire became reconstituted and consecrated in a new shape, entirely separate and independent from the Empire of the East. The Franks deprived the Longobards of all their dominions, excepting the Duchy of Benevento in Southern Italy. The power of the Pope was greatly increased by his assumption of the right of anointing the emperor, who rewarded him with rich donations and promised additions of territory. Rome, however, was ruled as a free municipality ; and Venice, after the manner of the Greek cities in the South, had already asserted her freedom. Such was the state of Italy after the last barbarian invasion—that, namely, of the Franks.

As usual, the new masters appropriated one-third of the land ; but the condition of the natives was now decidedly changed for the better. Roman law was recognised as the code of the vanquished, and this is an evident sign that it was never entirely obsolete during the two centuries of Longobard rule. Charlemagne greatly improved the condition of the Latins, and sometimes promoted them to *honours*, *i.e.*, to offices of royal appointment. But the special characteristic of his reign in Italy was the new hierarchy he established there. He

destroyed the power of the dukes, whose attitude was too threatening to the unity of the Empire, and raised instead the position of the counts. Even in the Marches, or border-provinces, he retained no dukes, but replaced them by marquises (Mark-grafen, Praefecti limitum). In this manner the ancient unity of the *comitatus*, or *Gau*, became likewise the basis of the new barbarian society. Nor did Charlemagne stop at this point, but began to distribute offices, lands, and possessions in *beneficio—i.e.*, in fief—and therefore on condition of obligatory military service. This proved the beginning of a social revolution, possibly originated at an earlier date, but now carried to completion under the name of feudalism. Not the emperor only, but kings, counts, and marquises also granted lands, revenues, and offices in fief, in order to obtain a sufficient supply of vassals. Thus an infinite number of new potentates was created : *vassalli*, *valvassori*, and *valvassini*, the latter being lowest in degree. Gradually the whole society of the Middle Ages took a feudal shape ; the recipient of a grant of land was bound to yield military service, at the head of the peasants employed on his ground. Similar privileges, similar obligations, accompanied every donation of land or bestowal of office ; for even official posts were generally supplemented by a concession of land or of revenue. Thus the Germanic tendency to division and subdivision in small groups was satisfied, while, at the same time, the Empire, the cities, and even the Church itself, assumed a feudal form. The bishops in their turn soon began to possess benefices, and gradually rose to increased power, until we find them in the position of so many counts and barons. Both in their own persons, and those of their subordinates, they enjoy immunity from ordinary laws and tribunals—an inestimable advantage, serving to enhance their independence and unite large clusters of population beneath their

sheltering sway. Feudalism, accordingly, is a new order, a new and thoroughly Germanic aristocracy, yet at the same time it is the root of a veritable revolution in barbaric society, the which revolution will continue to grow and extend through many vicissitudes. Step by step the Crown will begin to exempt the benefices or fiefs of the vassals from subjection to the count, and will then declare them hereditary by means of a series of laws, all designed for the purpose of irritating the lesser potentates against their superiors, and of giving increased strength to the royal authority; but which served, on the contrary, to open a way of redemption to the downtrodden people. All this, however, was still unforeseen in the days of Charlemagne. He organised the feudal system, and kept his realm united and flourishing, although soon after his death (814) the Empire was split into several kingdoms.

The rule of the Franks in Italy lasted to the death of Charles the Fat, in 888. And throughout this rule of 115 years, the revolution to which we have alluded was steadily making way. On all sides the number of benefices or fiefs continually grew, and year by year exemptions increased at an equal rate. These were conceded more easily to prelates than to others, since when laymen received benefices they were entitled to leave them to their heirs, and thus became inconveniently powerful. This state of things proved very favourable to cities in which bishops held residence. At first the count was sole ruler of the city, save the portion appertaining to the Crown, and called *gastaldiale*, as being under the command of a *gastaldo*, or steward; then, as the power of the bishop increased, another portion was exempted from the count's jurisdiction, as being *vescovile*, *i.e.*, the property of the bishop. Step by step this portion was enlarged until it included nearly the whole of the town: many cities, in fact, were ruled solely by the

bishop. Thus the fibres of barbarian society were weakened, and we might almost say unknit, by a method that would have served to keep it in subjection to the supreme authority of the monarch, but for the fact that the people, deemed to be dead, was not only breathing, but on the point of asserting its strength against nobles, kings and emperors, prelates, and Popes.

Two revolts in the cause of liberty successively took place, and both began under the Carlovingians, and continued during the reigns of their successors. The first enervated and enfeebled the barbarian society to which the soil of Italy was so ill suited; the second prepared the way for the rise of communes. With the death of Charles the Fat the rule of the Franks lapsed, and barbarian invasions likewise ceased. The Germanic tribes had settled down on Italian soil and were becoming civilised. Nevertheless, Italy had still to pass through a string of revolutions and years of ill fortune. At the dissolution of the Empire of the Franks, certain counts and marquises, especially the latter, who, by the union of several counties, had gained the power of dukes, were found asserting extravagant pretensions, even endeavouring to form independent states, and often with success. To this day, in fact, there are reigning families descended from Frankish marquises and counts. To compass their destruction benefices and immunities had been granted in vain: their power was not to be so easily extinguished. For, even in Italy, where, owing to the different character of the country, the ancient civilisation had tenaciously lingered on, and now began to awake to new life, and where, too, the Papacy and the Greeks of Byzantium had impeded the absolute triumph of Germanic institutions, feudal counts and marquises now arose to contest the crown. Next followed long years of renewed devastation and conflict, ending by the crown being retained in the grasp of German emperors and

kings. The first wars and quarrels were carried on by Berengarius of Friuli and Guido of Spoleto, with other Italian and foreign nobles, a German king, two Burgundian monarchs, and finally by King Otho of Germany, who remained victor. It was during these seventy odd years of continued strife that Italian kings first reigned in Italy, though with an always uncertain and disputed rule. Then came a forty years' peace (961–1002), during which Otho I., II., III. reigned in turn, and another Italian marquis, Hardouin of Ivrea, disputed the crown of Italy with the German kings. But in 1014 Hardouin was vanquished by Henry of Germany, surnamed the *Saint*, to whom succeeded Conradin of the Franconian or Salic dynasty.

These two German sovereigns completed the feudal revolution, already mentioned by us, the which, begun by the Carlovingians, and continued by the Othos, had failed nevertheless to assure the supremacy of kings and emperors over Italy. But, at all events, seeing that the Othos had purposely exempted numerous lesser vassals from rendering allegiance to the counts and barons, and had accorded many cities to prelates; also seeing that the renascence of communes was considerably promoted by all the aforesaid exemptions, some writers conceived the idea that this renascence was chiefly owed to the initiative of the Othos. But these emperors had a very different aim in view, and had failed to achieve it. They sought to undermine the strength of all possible assailants of the Crown, when threatened by revolts such as that of the Marquis of Ivrea. For this reason Henry the Saint continued to favour the greater feudatories at the expense of "holders of honours"—that is to say, of counts and marquises—and in fact almost annihilated the latter class. Conradin the Salic carried out the scheme more completely, by favouring even the minor feudatories and making benefices hereditary. From that moment the victory of

the German sovereigns over the feudal lords was assured; for vassals once rendered masters of their fiefs owed obedience to the Crown alone, and thus the pride of the great nobles was permanently abased. Not so the new popular pride, which had grown to be a power unawares.

Accordingly, we find a multitude of facts showing that the condition of the Roman race was continually improving; that feudal society, by the action of its own sovereigns, was daily losing substance and strength; that as the Latin civilisation revived by the natural force of events, it changed, assimilated, and absorbed the principles of Germanic society. Even before the two races came into conflict, the traditions of the conquered had frequently combated and overcome those of victors. The latter, indeed, had already accepted the Roman law to some extent, when the once subject race pleaded the sanction of their municipal statutes.

Italians were in a state of ferment and of radical transformation when the first signs of a revival of the communes appeared. Neither the barbarian rule nor the Empire had ever really mastered the social order of the peninsula; and exactly when feudalism was first founded and seemed likely to spread everywhere and assure the quiet supremacy of the emperors over Italy, fresh causes of peril and strife suddenly sprang into existence. Papacy and clergy attained to loftier and more menacing power; the immunities lavished on prelates, from dread of the laity, rendered them temporal potentates dependent on the emperors, while as spiritual dignitaries they owed obedience to the Pope: thus practically enjoying a double investiture. This led to much disorder and scandalous corruption in the Church, since prelates were converted into feudal lords, holding sway over cities, making war on other territories, keeping open court, and indulging in every worldly pleasure. The Popes wished to re-establish discipline, to

maintain absolute rule over the bishops, and nominate them unhindered; but this was opposed by the emperor, since the temporal authority of the prelates made them logically subject to his rule as well. Thus began the famous war of investitures between the Papacy and the Empire, the issue of which was so long undecided. Meanwhile neither the Church, the Empire, nor the feudal system could obtain complete mastery over the social movement, and the confusion was increased by their continual disputes. This state of things weakened even the authority of the prelates; and then the communes, having necessarily learnt the art of self-government during the period when dioceses were left vacant, having noted the prosperity of the Southern republics, and found their strength increased by the extension of commerce and the feudal disorganisation, finally saw that the moment to achieve freedom had arrived. Even in cities ruled by lay nobles, things followed the same course, since to side either with the Empire or the Church always served to excite much enmity against those in power, and procured many allies for the weaker party.

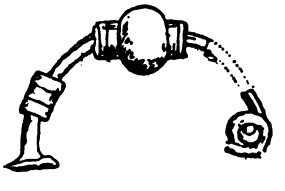
Accordingly the eleventh century witnessed the arisal of communes throughout Italy, and the joy of independence once realised, it was impossible to return to a state of vassalage, whether under bishops, counts, or the Empire itself. At first these communes were hemmed in on all sides by a vast number of dukes, counts, and barons of various degrees of strength, inasmuch as the feudal order was still very powerful and still supreme in all country districts. Of German descent and trained to arms, these nobles fought in their own interest, although nominally for the Empire and its rights, against the new communal order that suddenly faced them with such menacing strength. They swooped down from their strongholds to bar the trade of the towns; they levied tolls, threatened violence,

and tried to treat free men as their vassals. Thereupon the indignant citizens were stirred to vengeance from time to time, and often ended by razing great fortresses to the ground. On the other hand, the nobles still remaining in the cities became wearied of living among men who no longer respected the distinctions of class or race, and often departed to rejoin their friends. They frequently emigrated in such numbers that the citizens suffered injury by it, and issued decrees forbidding their exodus. The Pope gave encouragement to the communes, because the reduction of his prelates' temporal power did not displease him, and the abasement of the Empire was indispensable to his aims. Thus the struggle of the working classes against feudalism finally began, and with it the real history of our communes.

But it should not be thought that the Commune arose to champion the rights of man or in the name of national independence. Nothing of the kind. The Empire was still held to be the sole and universal fount of right. Almost to the close of the fifteenth century, in fact, all cities, whether Guelph or Ghibelline, foes or friends of the Empire, continued to indite their State papers in its name.[1] The revived republics always acknowledged its supremacy, and their own dependence, almost, one might say, as though in claiming a new and more general exemption, they only sought to be, as it were, their own dukes or counts. They combated the nobles and combated the Empire; but victory once assured, they recognised the authority of the emperor, and prayed him to sanction the privileges they had won. Nor was the destruction of the Empire at any time desired by the Popes; its protection was often indispensable to them, and they too recognised it as the legitimate heir of ancient Rome, and consequently as the only source

[1] Among other authorities, *vide* Gino Capponi, note to doc. 3, vol. i. of the "Archivio Storico Italiano."

of political and civil rights. Their purpose was to subject the temporal to the spiritual power. Therefore, during the rise of the Commune, theocracy and feudalism, Papacy and Empire, still subsisted together and always in conflict. The Commune had to struggle long against obstacles of all kinds; but it was destined to triumph, and to create the third estate and people by whom alone modern society could be evolved from the chaos of the Middle Ages. This constitutes the chief historical importance of the Italian Commune.



CHAPTER I.

THE ORIGIN OF FLORENCE.

I.

THE origin of Florence is wrapped in great obscurity, and little light is to be derived from chroniclers, who either avoided the subject altogether or clouded it over with legends. Much has been written of late touching these chroniclers and on the value and varying credibility of their accounts. But in endeavouring to ascertain everything, and push research too subtly, long and learned disputes have sometimes arisen on particulars which can never, perhaps, be verified and are scarcely worth knowing, while more significant and easily investigated points have been left untouched. By this method some risk is incurred of building up from those writers a species of occult science for the sole benefit of the initiated, whereas all that is absolutely known of the origin of Florence may be expressed in a few words.

The Florentine Commune being of tardier birth than many others, its historians and chroniclers were likewise of later date, since no commune possesses a written history until conscious of its own personality. Thus, it was only in the twelfth century that yearly records were first started, registering some of the more important events of Florence, giving dates, and names of places and

THE ARNO RIVER-GOD.

Bas-relief now in the Etruscan Museum, Florence

persons, while, at the same time, lists were made of the Consuls, the first magistrates of the Commune, and afterwards supplemented with the names of the Podestà, who succeeded to the Consuls. These magistrates being changed yearly, this catalogue served as a chronological guide, and was soon converted into a register of contemporaneous events in the town.

A very early fragment of these annals is preserved in the Vatican, and is written on the back of a sheet forming part of a codex [1] of Longobard laws. It contains eighteen records, running from 1110 to 1173, in different handwritings, all, however, of the twelfth century, with some blunders and no chronological arrangement. Nevertheless these records are of much importance, being the earliest we possess. A similar and longer series of records of much later date, running from 1107 to 1247, is to be found in a thirteenth-century MS.[2] in the National Library at Florence.

Both collections have been recently republished and illustrated by Dr. Hartwig, under the title of "Annales florentini," i. and "Annales florentini," ii.[3] The Codex containing the second series also comprises the oldest list extant of Consuls and Podestà, from 1196 to 1267, and

[1] Codex 772 of the Vatican Palatine Library, containing the so-called Lombard collection of Longobard laws. The discovery of the Florentine annals on the back of sheet 71 is owed to the librarian Foggini. He communicated his find to Professor Lami, who published part of the fragment, with notes. The whole was afterwards edited by Professors Pertz and Hartwig, and finally Professor C. Paoli issued an exact phototype of the fragment in No. 1 of the "Archivio paleografico Italiano," edited by Prof. Monaci, of Rome.

[2] This is a codex from Santa Maria Novella, now No. 776, E. A. (Suppressed Monasteries section), of the Magliabecchian Library. It consists of forty-six records, part of which (the first twenty-five, down to the year 1217) were published by Fineschi in his "Memorie Storiche degli uomini illustri di S. M. Novella," vol. i. pp. 330–332.

[3] D. O. Hartwig, "Quellen und Forschungen zur Altesten Geschichte der Stadt Florenz." Part i. of this work was published in Marburg, 1875; part ii., containing both series of annals, at Halle, 1880.

has been rendered more complete by the results of fresh research.[1]

Other and similar records must have been certainly made, first in Latin, then in Italian, and, in passing from this family to that, from hand to hand, enlarged, revised, and altered according to the taste, or even the fancy, of their transcribers. But, from the remains of those records and all matter copied from them by the chroniclers, it may be inferred with almost absolute certainty that they told little or nothing of the origin of the Commune. We are therefore inclined to believe that this was neither the outcome of virulent conflict nor of downright revolution, for either would have been undoubtedly registered in the annals, but that it gradually evolved and developed amid struggles of secondary importance.

If in these days we desire to ascertain the origin of the Florentine Commune, it is only natural that older generations should have felt even a keener interest in the theme. They, however, lacked the art and critical method enabling us to track and often lay bare the darkest and most remote periods of history by means of public documents, although many now perished must have been at their disposal. But our forefathers were readier to draw on their own imagination, and thus a legend regarding the origin of the city was created, and soon became widely diffused.

The primary germ from which this legend was developed and expanded must date from the twelfth century, seeing that it was known and recorded by the chronicler Sanzanome, who wrote during the first years of the thirteenth century. It cannot be much older than this, seeing that the events and dates to which it alludes, in

[1] First published by Fineschi (op. cit., vol. i. p. 257) and afterwards by Hartwig (ii. 185 and fol.), with many notes and additions. Some new names of Consuls are contained in the so-called "Chronicle" of Brunetto Latini, to be mentioned later on.

however vague and shadowy a fashion, carry it down beyond the eleventh century. Several inedited copies of this legend are still to be found in Florentine libraries,[1] and it has been published in three different compilations. The most ancient of these, in Latin, is contained in a codex dating from the end of the thirteenth or beginning of the fourteenth century.[2] The second, in Italian, is in a Lucchese MS.,[3] compiled between 1290 and 1342; at one point it gives a record of 1264,[4] and was probably written at that time. The third and later version, known as the "Libro fiesolano," is comprised in an Italian codex dated 1382, in the Marucellian Library at Florence, was discovered by Signor Gargani and published by him in 1854.[5] Dr. Hartwig discovered the second, which is identical, save in language, with the first, and published all three under the title of "Chronica de Origine Civitatis,"[6] found in the Lucca MS.; although in other MSS. it is styled "Memoria del Nascimento di Firenze."

Such was the material at the service of the old chroniclers, and all they had to rely upon regarding the origin of Florence. The earliest chronicler of whom any remains are extant is the judge and notary Sanzanome, who, as already noted by us, wrote his "Gesta Florentinorum" at the beginning of the thirteenth century. We find him mentioned more than once in Florentine docu-

[1] One was discovered by Pro. C. Paoli in the Laurentian Library, Codex xxviii. 8, *vide* his paper "Di un libro del Dr. O. Hartwig," in the "Archivio Storico It.," tom. ix., anno 1882. Other copies were discovered by the late Prof. Lami, who intended to mention them in an essay on Malespini.

[2] Discovered, but not published, by Follini, the editor of Malespini, in a codex of the Magliabecchian Library at Florence, shelf ii. No. 67.

[3] In the Archives of Lucca, in a codex of the Orsucci Collection, O. 40.

[4] This date (Hartwig i. 64) is not found in the Latin version, which is consequently held to be of earlier date.

[5] "Appendice alle Letture di famiglia," vol. i. Florence: Cellini, 1854.

[6] Pt. ii. of the "Appendice alle Letture di famiglia."

ments from 1188–1245.[1] Although we cannot be certain that this name always referred to the same individual, it is certain that the same chronicler records his presence in the war of Semifonte in the year 1202, and in that of Montalto in 1207. Besides, his work is found in a Florentine codex of the thirteenth century, and if not in his own hand, in the character of about the same period.[2] This first attempt at Florentine history, written in Latin by a judge and notary, supposed by Milanesi and Hartwig to have been a native of a neighbouring town, but resident in Florence, has a stamp of its own, very different from that of all subsequent Florentine chronicles. Sanzanome says nothing as to the origin of the Commune and its internal constitution. After a vague and hasty allusion to the old legend,[3] he starts with the war and destruction of Fiesole in 1125, "cum eius occasione Florentia sumpsisset originem." Thus, from the beginning, he shows us the Commune already established, with its consuls and captains, and proceeds to recount its conflicts with neighbouring powers in a stilted, rhetorical fashion, with uncertain and often erroneous dates, and with speeches in strained imitation of ancient Roman historians. Consequently some writers refused to assign any historic value to his work. But, on the other hand, critics of greater weight and impartiality, such as Hartwig, Hegel, and Paoli, have recognised that the work of this notary, who

[1] *Vide* Professor Santini, in pt. i. doc. 18 of his forthcoming work, gives a document dated June 14, 1188, with the signature, "Ego Sanzanome index et notarius." In the Acts of the Tuscan League of 1197 (Santini, vol. i. 21, p. 37) we find the name of "Sanzanome de Sancto Miniato" among the signatures following that of the Consul of San Miniato.

[2] Professor Paoli makes the same statement in his before-mentioned work. The Codex in question is the Magliab.-Strozz., Cl. xxv. 571. The "Gesta" were published about the same time by Hartwig (op. cit.) and by the Tuscan "Deputazione di Storia patria" (Cellini, 1876).

[3] Just at this point there are several gaps in the Codex.

was almost a precursor of the fifteenth-century humanists, is a literary phenomenon, and that the fact of its isolation makes it the more remarkable as a proof of ancient Florentine culture, and also because we find beneath its rhetorical flourishes much useful information on the early history of Florence.

Hence all the other chroniclers had to face one and the same problem: how to write a history, or even a bare chronicle of the earliest beginnings of Florence, from the scant and fragmentary accounts at their disposal? The notary Sanzanome shirked the difficulty by saying nothing of the foundation of the town, and then expanding his narrative with rhetorical flights, fictitious speeches, and descriptions of battles, in which his own fancy and imitation of the classics played the main part. But this method was neither congenial nor possible to the simpler folk of a later day, who sought to write as they spoke, and whose culture was slighter, or at all events very different from the notary's. These chroniclers, therefore, had no basis to build upon save one legend and a few scraps of information that could not possibly satisfy their patriotic pride.

Fortunately for their purpose, just at this time—namely, towards the middle of the thirteenth century—an event of great literary importance occurred, serving to put the Florentine chroniclers on a new track. A Dominican monk, one Martin of Troppau, in Bohemia, surnamed therefore *Oppaviensis*, vulgarly known as Martin Polono, chaplain, apostolic penitentiary, and afterwards archbishop, wrote an historical work which, although of no remarkable merit, had an extraordinary and rapid success. It was a species of manual of universal history, chronologically arranged under the names of the various emperors and Popes, down to the year 1268. Its author afterwards carried it down to a few years later, with an introduction

treating of the times anterior to the Roman Empire.[1] This book was mechanically arranged, and stuffed with anecdotes, blunders, and fables; but was the work of an eminent prelate, inspired with the Guelphic spirit. The author's method of arranging the events of the Middle Ages under the headings of Popes and Emperors served as a leading thread through the vast labyrinth. It is certain that his book was rapidly diffused throughout Europe, especially in Italy, and above all in Florence. As Prof. Scheffer Boichorst remarks: "Its first translator was a Florentine, and another Florentine, Brunetto Latini, the first to make use of it." In fact, the Florence libraries have numerous copies of it in Latin MSS. of the fourteenth century, while others of the same period comprise an Italian translation that, according to the results of learned research,[2] must have been produced in Florence towards 1279.[3] This fact alone is a most luminous proof of the rapid popularity and diffusion of the work. As it was a common practice with the scribes of that period to insert alterations of their own in the works they copied out, it may have easily occurred to some transcriber of this translation to enrich it here and there with the more important of the few facts then known of the early history of their city. But as Martin Polono's work was only brought down to the end of the thirteenth century, and items of Florentine history had increased in number and extent, so it came about that all these additions forsook universal history and were solely devoted to that of Florence.

[1] *Vide* Weiland's edition in the Mon^ta. Germ^a., xxii. 377–475, and the same editor's remarks in the "Archiv. der Gesellschaft für ältere deutsche Geschichte," vol. xii. p. 1 and fol.

[2] Ciampi, the editor of one part of it, and Scheffer Boichorst in his "Florentiner Studien."

[3] Prof. Santini, who gave much attention to the subject, discovered in Florence twelve copies of Martin Polono, and three of its translations, all of the fourteenth century. Other copies have been found since by Prof. Lami.

In this way the former merely served, as it were, as an introduction to the latter; a result highly gratifying to municipal self-complacency.

One of the first works introducing Martin Polono's book, translated, shortened, re-written, and with several interpolated Florentine items, is that entitled "Le Vite dei Pontefici et Imperatori Romani," once attributed to Petrarch, and existing in several Florentine fourteenth-century codices. In this work, however, Florentine history is still given very secondary importance, and indeed when at last, after various sequels and alterations, it finally appeared in print in 1478, Polono's primitive method was still maintained by giving summaries here and there of the lives of other emperors and Popes. But other versions soon appeared in which Florentine history filled a larger space.[1] In a fourteenth-century MS. of the Naples National Library, first examined by Pertz, we find Martin Polono's share of the work considerably curtailed, and the history of Florence not only much extended, but likewise carried down to 1309.[2] Here one begins to see that the writer was chiefly interested in Florentine events. Professor Hartwig was so struck by this fact as to be at the pains to extract everything relating to Florence from the MS., and print it apart, as one of the authorities probably recurred to by Villani.[3] In a chronicle attributed to Brunetto Latini the same purpose is still more clearly indicated. Some of the Florentine news contained in it

[1] "Impressum Florentiæ apud Sanctum Jacobum de Ripoli, Anno Domini mccccIxxviii." Other editions were produced in the sixteenth century. Prof. Santini has discovered three fourteenth-century MSS. of this work in Florence.

[2] The Naples Codex is marked xiii.-F. 16. A similar codex of the fifteenth century, carried down to the death of Henry of Luxemburg, is in the Laurentian-Gaddiano Collection, cxix.

[3] In pt. ii. of his "Quellen," &c., where these extracts are given under the title of "Gesta Florentinorum und deren Ableitungen und Fortsetzungen."

were long and frequently extracted, printed, and employed; notably the list of Consuls and Podestà used by Ammirato, and a narrative of the Buondelmonti tragedy (1215), differing considerably from Villani's version of the tale. It was speedily decided that the author must have written in 1293, since he records an event of that year, and says that he witnessed it with his own eyes.[1] Later, this Chronicle was attributed to Brunetto Latini, although the narrative is carried down to a date when Dante's master must have certainly ceased to exist.[2] During his learned researches in Florence Dr. Hartwig discovered a MS. that, in all probability, is the original autograph of the Chronicle.[3] Although mutilated—starting only from 1181—this Codex is doubly precious, as it clearly shows the method on which this and many similar works were compiled. There is a middle column containing the usual mangled version of Martin Polono[4]; and here on the margins, between the rubrics and sometimes even the lines, are added notices of general history, drawn from other sources, and special records of Florentine events.

The history is thus brought down to 1249, where a gap occurs extending to 1285, from which year the author continues his narrative to 1303.[5] But in this second part

[1] In mentioning certain Saracen nobles, sent as prisoners that year *alla Chiesa di Roma*, he adds: "*et io gli viddi*" ("and I beheld them").

[2] It comes down to 1303, but the concluding paragraph seems to be written by a later hand. But the preceding paragraph narrates events of 1297, and Brunetto Latini certainly died before then (1294).

[3] Florence National Library, cl. xxv. Cod. 566.

[4] This has also been clearly proved by Prof. Santini's numerous verifications.

[5] Two very short records, or rather notes, were added by another hand where the gap occurs, namely: "Pope Adrian V., born of the Fiesco family of Genoa, 1276, reigned as Pope thirty days; the Chair vacant twenty-eight days. Pope Innocent VI. elected, who came from Portugal." The second note is certainly erroneous. Innocent VI. (Etienne d'Albert) was a Frenchman of Limousin birth, and was raised to the Papacy in 1352. But Adrian's successor was John XXI., a Portuguese. The author mistook *Johannes* (probably written in an

the character of the work is entirely changed. Having no longer Martin Polono as a guide, he now forsakes that prelate's method. The affairs of the Empire and the Church are reduced to still smaller proportions, more space is given to those of Florence, and instead of being scattered haphazard over the narrative, they are now united and carried steadily on. Thus we see a real chronicle of Florence gradually developing before us and acquiring a special value of its own. Its discoverer, Dr. Hartwig, at first considered it an autograph, but finally conceived doubts on that score. The great disorder of the manuscript; its mutilated commencement; the gap between thirty-six years in the middle; the absence of certain records, comprised in certain excerpts from it, quoted by old writers; the discovery that many of these writers quoted from another MS. of the Chronicle belonging to the Gaddi Library; all this justified his statement that the problem could not be finally solved without the aid of the Gaddi Codex, which he had not yet been able to discover.

On the other hand, Professor Santini maintained, in a prize essay, that the Gaddi Codex could only be a copy of that found by Hartwig, and that the latter must be the mutilated original manuscript. After a short time the question was ultimately decided by another student of our Istituto Superiore, Signor Alvisi, who, having unearthed the Gaddi Codex in the Laurentian Library, found it to be a fifteenth-century copy.[1] Here the various fragments—

abbreviated form) for *Innocentius*, XXI. for VI. Even in other chronicles the two records stand together, and almost in the same words, but without the same blunder.

[1] Codex Laur. Gadd. 77. On the back are these words: "Cronica romanorum Pontificum et Imperatorum." This title explains the connection of the Chronicle with Martin Polono, and why the MS. so long escaped the researches of students of Florentine history. The work of Professor Santini from which we have quoted being an essay sent in for his B.A. examination, was discussed at the Istituto Superiore, and

arranged in separate columns in the original MS.—are joined with the remainder of the text, though often in an arbitrary fashion. Here, too, there is the gap between 1249–85, but the Chronicle, instead of starting from 1181, begins, like Martin Polono's first compilation, with Jesus Christ—*primo e sommo Pontefice*—and the Emperor Octavian. Thus, it may now be affirmed, that the Codex in the Florence National Library is a genuine and, as it were, photographic representation of the method employed for the earliest compilations of Florentine historiography. It allows us to see the author at work, as it were, before our eyes.

Another, but far less perfect, specimen of this kind of production is afforded by the Lucca MS., to which previous allusion has been made. The author carefully tells us that it was composed between the years 1290 and 1342. He transcribes the whole legend of the origin of Florence, and then gives his Italian *pasticcio* of Martin Polono, beginning from the Emperor Octavian. But he intersperses it with "many things relating to the affairs of Tuscany, and especially of Florence . . . the greater part being found in divers books on Tuscany, of which some contain more, some less" (*qual na più, qual na meno*). Having reached the year 1309 in this fashion, he continues his narrative by borrowing from Villani, several books of whose history had already appeared in 1341, and with this assistance carries his work down to 1342. He continues by reproducing a Latin description of Florence written in 1339, and then gives the Latin intro-

an account given of it in the "Arch. Stor. It.," Series iv. vol. xii. No. iv. p. 483 and fol., 1883. The paper itself has remained unpublished, as Alvisi's discovery made its demonstrations superfluous. Santini regarded the Chronicle as one of great importance, since it records the names of certain consuls, omitted in all the others, but contained in newly discovered documents, now in type, and forming part of the work that will soon, we hope, be published by Signor Santini.

duction that Martin Polono had added to his history. The compiler of this Lucca Codex avows that his method is neither logical nor chronological; but craves the reader's indulgence, saying that in this work he had first put together all the Italian and then all the Latin portions, with the intention of arranging them better afterwards, by fusing them together and writing the whole in Latin. This intention he seems to have found no time to fulfil. From this Codex also, all the portions relating to Florence were subsequently extracted and printed.[1] As may be seen, the compiler's method is always the same, although in this case heavier and more mechanical than usual, for lack of any inherent connection between the different parts. The only novelty consists in transcribing the entire legend to make it serve as an introduction to Florentine history; an example that, as will be seen, was afterwards followed by others.

But however flattering to Florentine self-love this system of fusing the history of the Commune with that of the universe might be, it was clearly apparent that the former remained crushed, as it were, by the contact. Hence even the fourteenth century witnessed attempts to expound it apart. Paolo Pieri begins his Chronicle from 1080, the year from which the other writers also date their earliest historical account of Florence, and continues it, with slight allusions to the Popes and slighter to the emperors, down to 1305, including the scanty Florentine records "gleaned from many chronicles and books, with certain novel matters seen by me, Paolino di Piero, and written *ad memoriam*." On the other hand, Simone della Tosa, who died in 1380, begins his "Annals" with a list of Consuls and Podestà (1196–1278), and then passes to the

[1] Baluzio Manzi, "Miscellanea," tom. iv. This Orsucci Codex, in the Lucca Archives, has been very minutely described by Hartwig (vol. i. xxx. and fol.), who, as before mentioned, brought out the Italian version of the legend he had extracted from it.

death of Countess Matilda (1115) and on to 1346, supplementing towards the close his meagre account of Florentine affairs with details about his own family. But simple summaries such as these, consisting only of a few pages, were more inadequate than ever to satisfy the needs of a city that now, in the fourteenth century, had already won a foremost place in Italy, was proudly asserting equality with Rome, and aspired to have a history similar to that of the ancient metropolis of the world.

Such was the ambitious problem that Giovanni Villani, as shown by his own words, proposed to solve. In the year 1300, he says, "being in Rome for the Jubilee, admiring the grand memories of that city, reading the glorious deeds narrated by Virgil, Sallust, Lucan, Titus Livy, Paul Orosio, and other masters of history, who recounted, not the events of Rome alone, but likewise strange events of the universal world: I borrowed their style and form."[1] Reflecting that "our old Florentines had left few and confused records of past deeds in our city of Florence,[2] and that our city, the child and creature of Rome, was on the upward path, and about to achieve great things, whereas Rome was on the decline," I resolved "to bring into this volume and new chronicle all the events and beginnings of the city of Florence, . . . and give henceforth *in full* the deeds of the Florentines, and *briefly* the notable affairs of the rest of the universe."[3] Thus, according to Villani, the course to be pursued was to connect the history of Florence with that of the world, as others had done before him, but in such wise that Florence should not be the loser, but rather play the chief part. Hence his work is no longer a mechanical mosaic; he arranges his history, dividing it in books and chapters, after the manner of the ancients. We do not know all the authorities from whom his work was derived, for this

[1] VIII. 36. [2] I. 1. [3] VIII. 36.

question has not yet been completely investigated. But we know that they were many in number. For general history, Martin Polono was still the main source; but Villani also drew from the "Gesta Imperatorum et Pontificum" of Thomas Tuscus,[1] the "Vita di San Giovanni Gualberto," the "Cronache di San Dionigi" (an Italian translation of which was printed—1476—before the original text), and the "Libro del Conquisto d'Oltremare," which was a history of the Crusades, translated from the French into almost every other language during the Middle Ages.[2]

That Villani is a very valuable authority in Florentine history dating from the end of the thirteenth century, is a fact well known to all, and need not be discussed here. As to the origin of the city, he has little that is genuinely historical to tell us. His accounts begin, as usual, from 1080, are more or less identical with those disseminated by other writers, not unfrequently charged with the same blunders, and often in the same words. This singular resemblance between many of the Florentine chroniclers when treating of early times, and remarked upon later, was easily explained so long as it was taken for granted that some chroniclers had copied from others. But when it could be proved, as was often the case, that the same resemblance existed even between totally independent writers, the problem was not so readily solved. For this reason, Prof. Scheffer-Boichorst, in noting the fact, after impartial and keen investigation, suggested the theory that all the different chroniclers had drawn from some

[1] In the Acta Sanctorum.

[2] "L'estoire de Eracles empereur, et la conqueste de la terre d'outremer (Receuil des historiens des Croisades)," translated into Latin, Greek, German, Spanish, Italian. For the sources consulted by Villani, *vide* Busson, "Die florentinische Geschichte der Malespini" (Innsbrück, 1869), and Scheffer-Boichorst, "Die Geschichte Malespini, eine Fälschung," in his "Florentiner Studien."

common source, of which nothing was now known. Seeing that Tolomeo of Lucca, whose Annals were already concluded before Villani began to colour his design, often quotes from "Gesta" and "Acta Florentinorum," "Gesta" and "Acta Lucensium," the German critic assigned the name of "Gesta Florentinum" to what, in his opinion, must have been the original source used by all the chroniclers of Florence down to the beginning of the fourteenth century. This hypothesis became generally accepted as the most probable explanation of a fact that was otherwise inexplicable. But when attempts were made to precisely define the nature and limits of the "Gesta"—to define, not only its language, but in which year it was begun, in which ended, together with the style and exact character both of the work and its author—the question then stood on very disputable ground. Accordingly, I will leave discussions of this kind on one side, as beyond the sphere of a general outline. Besides, I must agree with Prof. C. Paoli [1] in considering that the "Gesta" cannot have been a strictly individual work, but rather a collection of Florentine news, originally of very meagre proportions, but gradually enriched by fresh annalistic matter and new additions, as it passed from hand to hand. Some compilation of this kind, but of greater weight and repute (now unluckily perished), must have fallen into the hands of various chroniclers, who made use of it in turn, unconscious that it had served others before them. And these chroniclers were again copied by several of a later period.

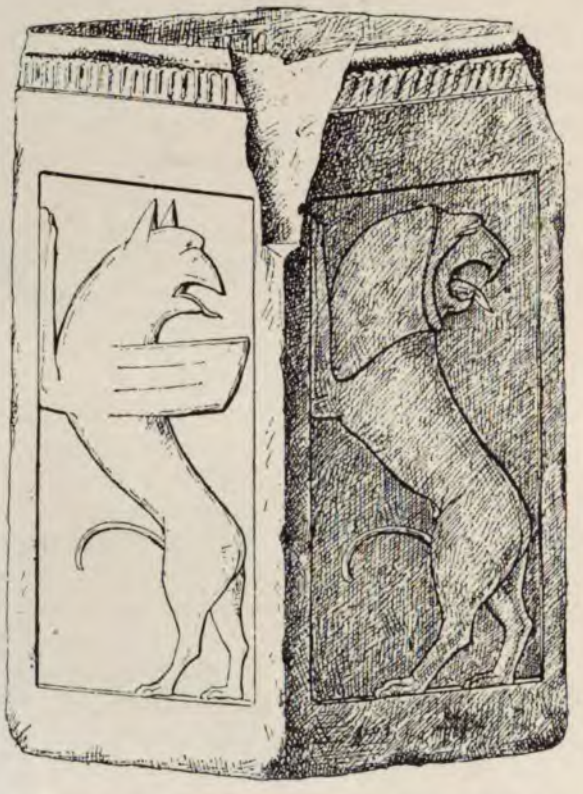
Villani begins with the Tower of Babel and the confusion of tongues and then passes on to the legendary origin of Florence, dividing it in chapters and expounding it as though it were genuine history, but inserting various alterations, to which we shall refer later on. He then proceeds with a general history of the Middle Ages, and

[1] *Vide* Paoli's article on Hartwig's work.

from the year 1080 engrafts on this stock all the accounts of Florence he had been able to collect, and even colours these by a variety of other legends much diffused among the people at the time, and often, also, by the addition of fantastic considerations of his own. What amount of accurate knowledge can be derived from all this? Substantially we find a single legend, and a small number of historical facts of undoubted value, though not free from errors, floating, as elsewhere, in an ocean of events quite unconnected with Florence, intermixed with scraps of misty traditions or legends, arbitrarily interpreted and explained. Therefore, the first question to be decided is that of the origin and value of the legend itself. Can any historical information be derived from it, either directly or indirectly? The second question is: Can it be ascertained with any certainty what original nucleus of authentic information the "Gesta Florentinorum" must have contained? The latter at least presents no serious difficulty, seeing that when we compare the various chroniclers, particularly those who worked independently, and extract what Florentine material they used in common and often gave in the same words, the main point is won. But, after all this, and after trying to extract some substance (scant enough, as will be seen) from the legend, very little genuine information is gained. It is therefore an absolute necessity to seek the aid of all public and private documents contained in our Archives, and of all learned modern investigations regarding mediæval history in general, and that of Florence in particular. Florentine historical research, first inaugurated by Ammirato, was diligently pursued in the eighteenth century by Borghini, Lami, and numerous other scholars, down to the present day. Nevertheless, the definite results of these prolonged inquiries, this vast display of learning, were still very few. For instance, we find that even the illustrious

Gino Capponi, after a short introduction to his History of Florence, is compelled, like the ancients, to leap to the death of Countess Matilda, and makes his first mention, so to say, of the Commune after it had already existed for some time. Then the history of almost two centuries, to the year 1215, or thereabouts, is summed up in twelve pages, and only from the thirteenth forward are events related really in full.

But in these days the study of mediæval documents has made extraordinary progress, above all in Germany, and accordingly the Florentine question has been again reopened. Dr. O. Hartwig was the first to apply his learning to the task, employing the scientific method. He not only examined all that was published on the subject, but made fresh researches in Italian libraries and archives, further aided by precious notes of documents newly discovered in Tuscany by D. Wüstenfeld. Thus, in the work from which we have frequently quoted, he was enabled to give a collection of valuable documents and of learned dissertations which have been already turned to account, will serve as a basis for future researches, and would be still better known and appreciated were they penned in a more popular style. Much has been found, very much read by Prof. Perrens, who has devoted his life to Florentine history, and already published eight volumes of his work. His first volume, of five hundred pages, only extends to the middle of the thirteenth century, and therefore treats of the origin of the city learnedly and at length. All Italians owe him gratitude for this; but it must be confessed that his untiring zeal, vast learning, and prodigious reading have not always resulted in a due amount of historical accuracy, and sureness of method. Treating of a period in which all has to be built up on a very scanty number of known facts, unless these facts are thoroughly ascertained dis-



ETRUSCAN TOMBSTONE, MERCATO VECCHIO, FLORENCE.

astrous consequences are apt to ensue. For example, in investigating the first origin of the Consuls, he still relies on the document of Pogna, dated March 4, 1101, in which they are named, and without remarking that Capponi, from whom, nevertheless, he continually quotes, had proved that, although long thought correct, this date was erroneous, and should be altered to March 4, 1181, Florentine style, the which signifies 1182 in the modern style. Thus Prof. Perrens introduces Consuls long before they were born.[1] Elsewhere he plunges into the very intricate dispute as to the jurisdiction exercised over their own territory by the Florentines of the twelfth century. He repeats with the old chroniclers that in 1186 Frederic I. deprived them of all jurisdiction beyond the city walls, but that they re-acquired it in 1188. He adds that on the Emperor Frederic's decease in 1190, his successor, Henry VI. "comme don de joyeux evènement, multiplie les privilèges." He fails to reflect that the patent quoted in support of the latter assertion bears the date of 1187, and that he gives the date in a note of his own.[2] How is the reader to disentangle this skein? As another example, we may add that the author gives as an historical fact the legendary tale of the origin of the Colombina festival held on Holy Saturday. The Florentines are sent to the Crusades by their archbishop, Ranieri, in 1099: that is several centuries before Florence possessed an archbishop. Pazzino de Pazzi, in reward for his feats of valour at the taking of Jerusalem, receives the *mural crown* from Godfrey de Bouillon, together with the right to change his arms and adopt the crosses and dolphins, the which change was only effected by the Pazzi

[1] "Il y en eut (des consuls) tout au moins en 1101." And after quoting the document he adds this note:—"Devant de fait si positif, il serait oiseux de S'arrêter aux conjectures des auteurs même presque contemporains," p. 209.

[2] Perrens, pp. 152–4.

several centuries later.[1] Pazzino returns to Florence in triumph, mounted on a car, of which the description is given; and at a time when the Commune was not yet established,[2] is received in the style of a Roman conqueror by the people, the clergy, and the magistrates. He has brought three stones from the Holy Sepulchre, and these are the flints from which the sparks are still struck to fire the Car of the Dove. All this is derived from Gamurrini's "Storia genealogica," an utterly valueless work.[3] Readers may consider it strangely invidious on my part to be at the pains to refer to certain blunders contained in a work of which I am the first to recognise the merits, and by which I have often profited. But it seemed necessary to explain why, in spite of having praised, I should so seldom quote it. The work undeniably comprises abundant historic material, is written with vivacity and clearness, contains many keen observations, and does honour to an author to whom Italians are bound to be grateful. But although for all these reasons it is a book deserving attention, no possible use can be made of it, without continually verifying the authorities cited in it.

Here a word must be said touching another and far less imposing work, to which we have been able to refer with far greater security. Already, in certain short papers appearing in the "Archivio Storico Italiano," Prof. Santini had proved his power of keen research on the early history of Florence, and has now had the happy idea of collecting all the documents on the subject, both published and unpublished, existing in the Florentine Archives.

[1] Borghini, "Discorsi," vol. ii. pp. 27 and 93. Florence, 1755.

[2] The ninth and last volume is now published, and extends to the fall of the Republic (1530–32).

[3] Concerning the numerous errors contained in this first volume, Dr. Hartwig has written at some length in Sybil's "Historiche Zeitschrift," vol. iii. No. 3, anno 1868. Of the other volumes nothing need be said at this point.

SITE OF A ROMAN VILLA DISCOVERED NEAR S. ANDREA, FLORENCE.

After copying and verifying them from the originals, he is now bringing them out in a bulky volume. It would be well if he or other writers could complete the same task in all cities, or at least in those of Tuscany, which had so many ties in common. Meanwhile, his book will form a new and solid foundation for Florentine historic research. We are doubly grateful for his kindness in allowing us to examine his press proofs. Thus we have been enabled to profit by his forthcoming book in advance of its publication, and shall have frequent occasion to quote from it. Other works, unmentioned in the text, will be recorded in the notes for our readers' benefit.

II.

Turning away for the moment from codices and chroniclers, we now come to the legend presenting the first problem that has to be solved, or at any rate discussed. Undoubtedly this legend was very widely circulated among the people. Even the "Divina Commedia" (Par. xv. 125) tells us how the Florentine dame at her spinning wheel—

> "Favoleggiava con la sua famiglia
> De' Troiani di Fiesole e di Roma."

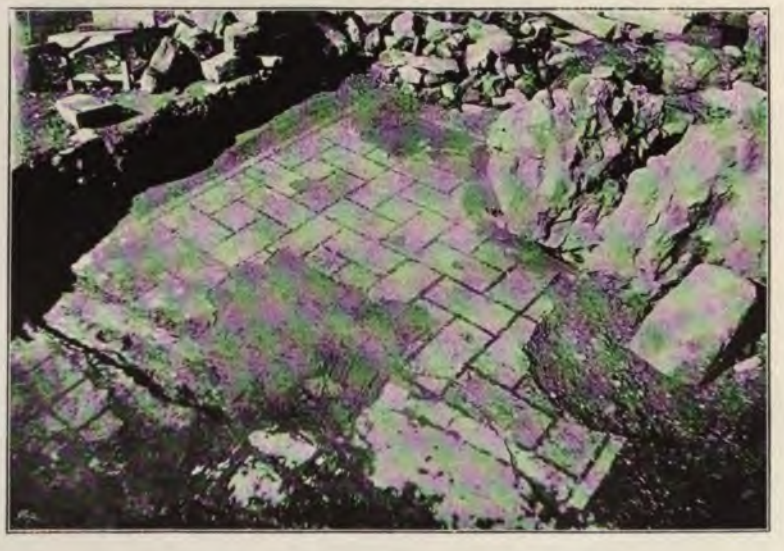
Nevertheless, it appears to have had a literary rather than a purely popular origin. In fact, it is only a strange medley of classical and mediæval traditions, chiefly taken from books, and more or less arbitrarily altered, regarding the siege of Troy, the flight of Æneas, and the origin of Rome; and as municipal pride sought to connect the latter with that of Florence, all the scanty and vague notices, or rather traditions, existing on the subject had been carefully scraped together. The legend begins with Adam, but

quickly leaving him aside, strides on to the foundation of Fiesole by Atlas and his spouse, aided by the counsels of Apollonius the astrologer. Fiesole was the first city built; it was erected on the healthiest spot in Europe, and hence its name—*Fie sola.* The children of Atlas spread over the land and populated it. The eldest son was called Italo, and gave Italy its name; the third was Sicano, who conquered and named Sicily. The second son, Dardano, wandered farther a-field, and founded the city of Troy.[1] The legend next passes rapidly to the Trojan war, the flight of Æneas, and the foundation of Rome, of which city Florence is the favourite offspring. It then goes on to speak at much greater length, of Catiline, regarding whom so many particulars are given, that he must have been the subject of a separate legend which either, when united with the rest, at a later date, formed the so-called "Chronica de origine Civitatis," or was, more probably, anterior to this, and only amalgamated with it in subsequent compilations.

After conspiring against Rome Catiline came to Fiesole, whither the Romans pursued and attacked him, under their consuls Metellus and Fiorinus. The latter falling in battle, their army was totally defeated on the banks of the Arno. But Julius Cæsar came to avenge them, besieged and destroyed Fiesole; and then, on the same spot where Fiorinus had fallen, a new city was built, and called Fiorenza to commemorate his name. Catiline fled to the Pistorian Appennines, but was pursued there and

[1] Servius writes, in his Commentary on the Ænead (bk. iii. v. 104): "Dardanus Iovis filius et Electrae, profectus de Corytho [Cortona], civitate Tusciae, primus venit ad Troyam." And farther on (Com., bk. iii. v. 187), he says that "Dardanus et Iasius fratres . . . cum ex Etruria proposuissent sedes exteras petere ecc." In tracing the genealogy of Æneas, he begins thus: "Ex Electra Atalantis filia et Iove Dardanus nascitur." This must have partly inspired the legend, although, according to the latter, Electra is the wife of Atlas and the daughter of Jove. *Vide* Hartwig, vol. i. xxi.

PAVEMENT OF ROMAN HOUSE UNDER THE MERCATO VECCHIO, FLORENCE.



MOSAIC PAVEMENT OF ROMAN BATHS, FLORENCE.

routed. So great was the number of the killed, that a pestilence broke out, and from this Pistoia derived its name.[1]

In the legend the nomenclature of Tuscan cities is always explained on the same principles, Pisa, for instance, being derived from *pesare* (to weigh). For the Romans received their tributes there, and these were so numerous that they had to be weighed in two different places. This is why they spoke of the city in the plural, *Pisae Pisarum.* Lucca comes from *lucere* (to shine), because it was the first city converted to the light of Christianity. When the Franks[2] marched against the Longobards in the South they halted at a place in central Italy, and left all their

[1] Even Brunetto Latini, in bk. i. of his "Tesoro," makes the Catiline legend relate to the origin of Florence, records the great slaughter occurring at the battle wherein Catiline was routed, and also the subsequent pestilence. "E per quella grande peste di quella grande uccisione, fu appellata la città di Pistoia (bk. i. chap. 37, in the vulgate of Bono Giamboni). The principal authorities for the historical information in the "Tesoro" are Ditti of Crete, and the "De excidio Troie," attributed to Darses the Phrygian. Undoubtedly the latter is also one of the sources of our legend. *Vide* Thor Sundy, "Della vita e delle opere di Brunetto Latini," translated, with many additions, by Prof. R. Renier. Florence: Le Monnier, 1884.

[2] The "Libro fiesolano" styles them Africans instead of Franks, *una compagnia venuta d'Africa*, as elsewhere, instead of *Ottone* or *Otto*, it says *Ceto*, a blunder also found in the MS. that was printed. The blunders probably originated from some ignorant copyist of the legend, and were frequently repeated by later scribes. John of Salisbury ("Polikratikus," vi. 17, edit. Giles), in mentioning the cities built by Brennus, according to history, repeats the same story of Siena contained in the legend. He remarks that all this is not real history, *sed celebris traditio est*, adding, however, that tradition is confirmed by the fact that in their constitution, beauty and customs, the Sienese resemble "ad gallos et Britones a quibus originem contraxerunt." John of Salisbury's words are also recorded by Benvenuto da Imola in his Commentary on the "Divina Commedia," where he mentions that Dante intended to allude to this resemblance ("Inferno," xxix. 121) in the lines:

"Or fu giammai
Gente si vana come la senese?
Certo non la francesca si d'assai."

Boccaccio's "Comento" gives the same explanation of these lines.

aged people behind them. Thus the city built on that site received the name, likewise in the plural, of *Senae Senarum*. Florence, however, according to the legend, derived its name from Fiorinus, although later writers declared it to be taken from the word *Fluentia*, because it stood by the river Arno; others, again, from the numerous flowers springing from its soil. It was built in the likeness of Rome, with a capitol, forum, theatre, and baths, and was consequently called Little Rome. Its friends are always the friends of Rome; the foes of the one are foes of the other.

After five hundred years, so runs the legend, *Totila flagellum Dei* came and destroyed Florence, and immediately rebuilt the rival city of Fiesole. This clearly alludes to Attila, since he bore the title of *flagellum Dei*, and in the Middle Ages was the real type of the devastator and destroyer of cities. As he never came to Florence he was converted into Totila, who had been there, although never designated by the same appellation. This exchange of names was aided by their resemblance, nor is it the sole example the Middle Ages afford of the confusion of Attila with Totila. In the "Divina Commedia" ("Inferno," xiii. 148–9) we find Dante attributing the destruction of Florence to Attila, when he says:

> "Quei cittadin che poi la rifondarno
> Sovra il cener che d'Attila rimase."

And hereby he doubly deserts the legend; for, according to that, Florence was rebuilt by the Romans and then, naturally, on the pattern of Christian Rome, with churches dedicated to St. Peter, St. John, St. Laurence, &c., as in the Eternal City.

Thereupon more than 500 years[1] elapsed in peace;

[1] The Latin compilation says: *quingentos annos et plus;* the Italian, and more modern versions, merely say, "five hundred years."

but then Florence, finally resolving to be revenged on its perpetual rival, suddenly attacked and destroyed Fiesole. At this point we may remark that, if Florence had been first founded in Cæsar's time, and adorned with Roman monuments at a later date; if, after 500 years,[1] it was destroyed by Totila, and then itself overthrew Fiesole after another interval of 500 years, the chronology of the legend clearly brings us to the eleventh century at least. If we also add that the assault and partial destruction of Fiesole really occurred in 1125, it follows that, as we have noted, the legend cannot have been framed before the twelfth century.

Here, then, it should end and give place to history. In fact, Sanzanome, the earliest of the chroniclers, begins his work with the destruction of Fiesole. But the "Libro fiesolano" sometimes introduces capricious turns in the framework of the legend, and at this point makes an addition worthy of note as an evidence of the mode in which these fantastic stories were built up. The added portion refers to the Uberti, powerful citizens always opposed to popular government in Florence. According to tradition, they came originally from Germany with the Othos. Evidently, however, this theory was repugnant to the author of the "Libro fiesolano," possibly an adherent of the Uberti, and he therefore remarks, with some heat, that, on the contrary, the Uberti were descended from Catiline, "most noble king of Rome," with Trojan blood running in his veins. Catiline's son Uberti Cesare had a Fiesolan wife, who bore him sixteen children; and he was afterwards sent by Augustus to reconquer Saxony, which had risen in rebellion. While in that country Uberto Catilina married a German lady of high position, and from this union sprang "the

[1] Even history tells us that Totila was in Tuscany towards the middle of the sixth century.

lineage of the good Ceto [Otho] of Sansognia." Thus it is false that the Uberti were "born of the Emperor of Germany, the truth being that the emperor was born of their race." [1] This addition, posterior to the rest of the legend, shows that the author desired to exalt the Uberti; but, remembering their constant hostility to the Florentine government, declared them descended from Catiline and his Fiesolan bride. Also, being unable to deny outright their Ghibelline proclivities and Germanic origin, yet unwilling to acknowledge their descent from the Othos, he converts them into the latter's progenitors. Thus the legend is brought into harmony with its compiler's views, or rather, with his intent of magnifying his friends.

Inquiry into the sources of this legend would only lead us astray, without throwing any new light on the origin of Florence, since the fable has no real historical value. We need only say that, besides Darses' "De excidio Troiae," the commentary to Virgil of Servius; Orosio's History, Paolo Diacono's Roman History, and the "Storia Miscella," &c., must have been consulted for its compilation.[2] Leaving the question aside, we may rather note that, although Villani and Malespini both give the legend as a preface to their histories, they not only refer to two separate compilations, but use them in a totally different way.[3] This is another proof that even if Malespini's chronicle were copied from Villani, it is not always an exact reproduction. He refers to the "Libro fiesolano," [4] but enlarges it with two entire chapters of his own, containing a complete story, probably derived from some episode of the Catiline legend. And although

[1] "Libro fiesolano," chap. xv.

[2] This is also mentioned by Hartwig, i., xxiv., and fol.

[3] The first to note this was Hegel: "Ueber die Anfange der florentinischen Geschichtschreibung," in Sybel's Historical Journal, No. 1, anno 1876.

[4] Chaps. xvi. and xvii. of Follini's edition.

teeming with the strangest anachronisms, it is better written and far livelier than the rest.

In this tale we find Fiorino converted into a Roman king, married to the most beautiful woman ever seen, appropriately named Belisca. After the defeat and death of her husband, Queen Belisca remained the captive of a wicked knight named Pravus, but Catiline causes him to be put to death, and carries off Belisca, of whom he is desperately enamoured. The queen, however, is in despair concerning the fate of her lovely daughter Teverina, imprisoned in the house of one Centurione, and adored by him. In kissing Teverina's beautiful hair this man had exclaimed: "It is these that enchain me, for lovelier locks have I never seen." On the day of Pentecost the mother attended mass in the Fiesole church, and with bitter tears bemoaned the loss of her child. Her prayer was heard by a serving-maid, who knew where Teverina was hidden, and revealed it to the weeping mother. On receiving the news, Catiline instantly attacked Centurione's palace, and, after a fierce struggle, succeeded in capturing him. The prisoner owed his life to Belisca's intercession; for, having regained her child, she desired to save him, dressed his wounds, and urged him to fly from Catiline's wrath. Centurione consented to escape, and having mounted his horse, implored permission to bid a last farewell to Teverina. But when she appeared, he caught her in his arms, and galloped away, followed by his men. The mother fainted from grief, and Catiline, "with all his barons," a thousand horse and two thousand foot, pursued the traitor to the castle of Naldo, ten miles off, and proceeded to attack him there. But at that moment news came that the Romans were marching on Fiesole, so he was obliged to hasten back there before the siege should begin. Thus ends the singular episode annexed to the

legend, when, having lost its primitive character, it became a fairy tale while pretending to be history.

Villani, on the other hand, follows a more ancient compilation, and rejects the Belisca story. He, too, is acquainted with the "Libro fiesolano," makes some use of it, but considers it unauthentic exactly at the point where we find Malespini adhering to it. In fact, when recording the pretended descent of the Uberti from Catiline, Villani adds: "We find no proof of these matters in any authentic history." [1] Also, in trying, as far as possible, to give the legend a more genuine and historical appearance, he often inserts alterations drawn from the sources on which the legend itself was based, sometimes quoting Roman poets and historians such as Ovid, Lucan, Titus Livy, and, above all, Sallust, to whom he refers when adding certain historical particulars to the Catiline legends. A permanently instructive psychological fact is afforded us by the men of this period, and most of all by Villani. How was it that a contemporary of Dante—a man practised in affairs, cultivated, intellectual, and acutely observant—could mingle so much and such puerile credulity with great intelligence, culture, and common sense?

In short, what substantial information can be gleaned from the "Chronica de origine civitatis"? Besides the ambitious aim, common to nearly all the cities of Italy, of trying to trace their origin back to the Romans and Trojans, the "Chronica" wishes to impress upon us that the Etruscan Fiesole was the constant rival of Roman Florence, which could not prosper until the former was destroyed. Therefore, Catiline, the enemy of Rome, is the defender of Fiesole, Cæsar, Augustus, the emperors, are the founders, champions, and restorers of Florence, which is always described as being in the likeness of Rome and styled little Rome, Augusta, Cesarea, &c. Totila or

[1] Villani, i. 41.

Attila—that is, barbarians who overthrew the Empire—are likewise destroyers of Florence. Another legend of later date attributes the rebuilding of the city to Charlemagne, the restorer of the Empire. So at least the tale runs in Villani and Malespini; but there is no trace of it either in the "De Origine," or the "Libro fiesolano," both impregnated with Roman traditions only, and the legends of chivalry being as yet unknown to Florence. In fact, Villani remarks, when repeating the tale: "We find (it) in the 'Chronicles of France.'" [1]

We may accept as a certainty that the first origin of Florence was owed to Etruscan Fiesole, and that this was known even in the days of Dante is proved by his lines to the Florentines ("Inferno," xv. 61–3):

> "Ma quell' ingrato popolo maligno,
> Che discese da Fiesole ab antico,
> E tiene ancor del monte e del macigno."

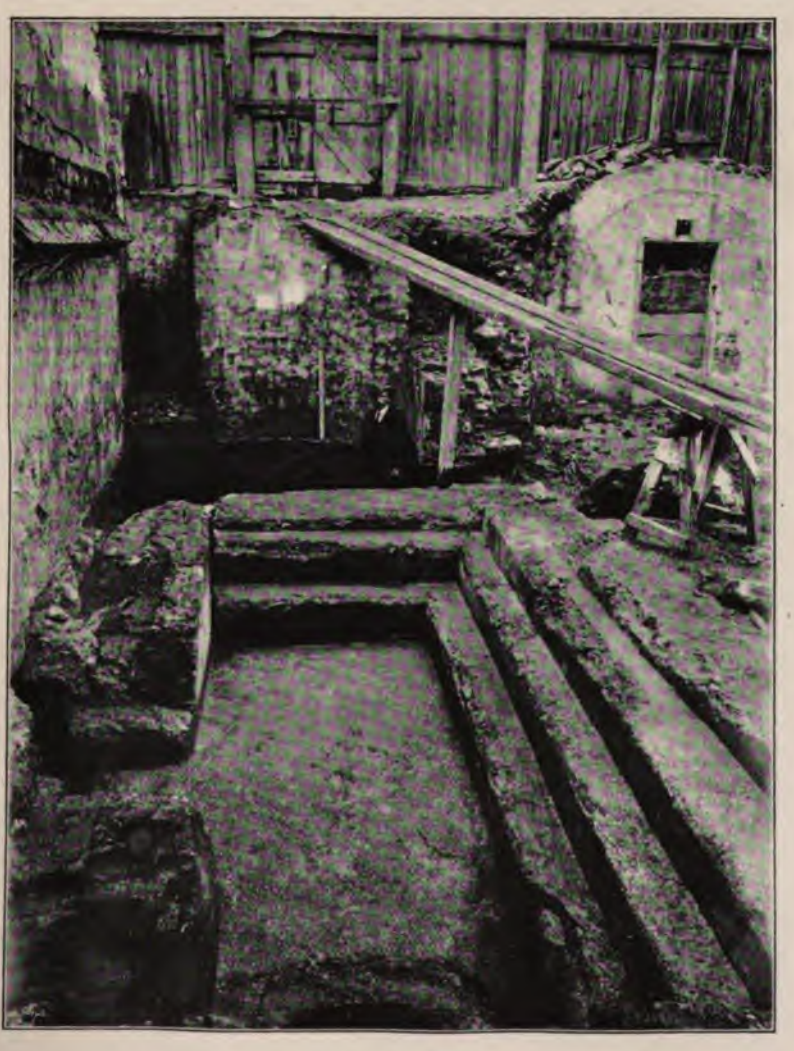
And Niccolò Machiavelli, leaving all legends aside (as Aretino had done before him), justly declared that the traders of Fiesole had begun from very remote times to form a commercial settlement on the Arno, at the point where the Mugnone runs into the river. So gradually a cluster of cabins arose, grew into houses, and finally became a rival city. But the city was entirely constructed by the Romans, though at what precise period is still unascertained. It is scarcely probable that the event can have occurred earlier than two centuries before Christ. Perhaps the city began to rise when, to protect Tuscany against Ligurian invaders, the Romans made a network of roads through the valley of the Arno; that is, when (according to Livy) C. Flaminius *viam a Bononia perduxit Arretium*, the which road crossed the Ponte Vecchio. Strabo says nothing of Florence; Tacitus and Pliny are

[1] Villani, iii. 3.

the first to mention it. But in the second century of the Vulgar Era Florius already styles it *Municipium splendidissimum*, and records it among the cities which suffered most in the days of Sulla.[1] Recent excavations made in digging new sewers under Florence have furnished proofs that in Sulla's time the city must have already possessed buildings of no small importance, including an amphitheatre.[2] The restoration of Florence, after the serious injuries inflicted on it in Sulla's day, is generally attributed to Augustus, who is supposed to have made it the seat of one of the twenty-eight colonies founded by him, whence the name *Italia, Augusta, Florentia.* The "Liber Coloniarum" (p. 213, 6) numbers Florence among the colonies formed by the *Triumviri* (45 B.C.), and it certainly must

[1] *Vide* G. Rosa, "Delle Origini di Firenze," in the "Archivio Storico Ital.," Series iii., vol. ii. p. 62 and fol. Hartwig, op. cit., and Milani, "Scavi di Mercato Vecchio," in the "Notizie degli scavi nel mese d' Aprile, 1887, Atti dell' Accademia dei Lincei."

[2] In digging a sewer in the street called Borgo dei Greci, in 1886, the discovery was made in Professor Milani's presence, "at the depth of about three metres beneath the street level, and exactly beneath the pavement of the first circuit of the Amphitheatre, . . . of a half *asse onciale*, weighing 12 grammes 25, undoubtedly coeval with the construction of the Florentine Amphitheatre. This kind of coin assuredly dates from 89 B.C., and was issued after the Plautian-Papirian decree reducing the weight of the aes from 1 oz. to ½ oz. The aes cut with a chisel were only in currency for a short time, and were withdrawn when the new coins were issued. Accordingly they must have ceased by the date of the second triumvirate (43 B.C.), when the aes was further reduced to the third of an ounce. We may therefore accept the conclusion that the Florence Amphitheatre was of the Sullian period. Opposed to this conclusion is the fact that, according to the report of Dione (li. 23), the first stone amphitheatre built in Rome was that of Taurus, dating from anno 30 B.C. But recalling how Cicero accused Sulla of having wasted treasures on magnificent buildings, exactly when he was under Fiesole, one is justified in assigning the construction of the Florence amphitheatre, and also of that of Pompei, to Sulla's day. Likewise the basements of the *Tuscanic* columns, found *in situ* near the Amphitheatre, and some architectural fragments discovered in 1887 on the south side of Santa Maria del Fiore, confirmed the opinion that some of the chief public buildings of Florence were connected with the times of Sulla and also with the last days of the Republic." (From a letter by Prof. Milani addressed to myself.)



PISCINA FRIGIDARIA.

Discovered near the Campidoglio, Florence.

have been a colony in 15 B.C., when the city sent a deputation to Tiberius asking him to forbid the junction of the river Chiana with the Arno, on account of the damage this would cause (Tacitus, "Ann.," i. 79). But the weighty authority of Mommsen supports the view that, in spite of the testimony given by Florius, the colony of Florence was founded instead by Sulla.[1] The same date may be assigned to the construction of the oldest circuit of walls, existing during a great part of the Middle Ages, and some remains of which have been discovered in our own day.

Florence would seem to have been built in the form of the ancient Roman *Castrum*, a quadrangle traversed by two wide and perfectly straight streets, crossing it in the centre at right angles and dividing it into quarters. The Campidoglio stood in the middle on the site afterwards occupied by the Church of Santa Maria in Campidoglio, and the Forum was near at hand, on the site of the now demolished Mercato Vecchio. There was also the amphitheatre, known in the Middle Ages as the *Parlascio*, of which some traces exist near Borgo de' Greci; a theatre (in Via de' Gondi.); a temple of Isis (on the site of San Firenze); and baths in the street still known as Via delle Terme.[2] Accordingly, it is not surprising that the city, which was then very small and limited to this side of

[1] The inscription (now lost) beginning thus: "Col[*onia*] Iul[*ia*] Aug[*usta*], Flor[*entia*]", should be differently interpreted, according to Mommsen, as referring to Vienne in Dauphiny. *Vide* "Hermes," 1883, p. 176 and p. 180, note 1. Prof. Milani takes the same view regarding the new and important inscription recently found in the excavation of the Mercato Vecchio, containing the following words:

". . . Genio Coloniae
. . . Florentiae."

Vide "Scoperte epigrafiche nel Centro di Firenze," in the "Nazione," April 15, 1890.

[2] Milani, "Relazione degli scavi," &c.

the Arno, should have been called Little Rome, and sought to base its origin on Roman traditions. The whole spirit of its monuments spoke of Rome, and the same spirit was echoed by the minds and imaginations of those who invented the legend. Even now, after so many centuries, so many changes, we still find remains of Roman buildings, and of so-called Byzantine architecture, but no single trace of the real Gothic or Longobard style.

Florence gradually extended as time went on, and *borghi* were built outside the walls, the largest of these suburban quarters being the *Borgo*, connected with the city proper by the Ponte Vecchio. In the second half of the eleventh century, and in the year 1078, if Villani's statement be correct (iv. 8), new walls were built to replace the palisades surrounding the *Borghi*. Villani may be accepted as an authority, now that he is known to have superintended the construction of the third and last circuit of walls begun in 1299 (viii. 2 and 31), and now almost entirely destroyed save for a fragment here and there.

For a long time after the epoch of the barbarian invasions the history of Florence is involved in great obscurity, and what little information we have on the subject is either entirely legendary or jumbled with legends.

In 405 Radagasius led a horde of Goths, mixed with other tribes, into Tuscany and lay siege to Florence. But the walls held out until the Roman general Stilicho came to the rescue, defeated the assailants, and put their leader to death. The resistance of Florence was greatly magnified, and Stilicho's victory attributed to a miracle. Tradition added that the battle having been fought on the 1st of October, the Feast of Santa Reparata, the Florentines inaugurated their Pallio races on that day, and founded the Church of Santa Reparata; but both these events were of later occurrence. The tradition merely serves to show how long Florence preserved the memory of its narrow escape from destruction.

Regarding the next century there is an absolute blank; but then comes the legend that even Villani accepts, relating how Totila, *flagellum Dei*, destroyed Florence and re-built Fiesole.[1] To this the chronicler appends a second tale to the effect that after the city had remained thus devastated and ruined for 350 years, Charlemagne summoned the Romans to join him in rebuilding the city in the likeness of Rome, and that it thus arose anew, adorned with churches dedicated, like those of Rome, to San Pietro, San Lorenzo, Santa Maria Maggiore, &c., and was also granted a territory extending three miles beyond the walls.[2] Here one sees that although the chronicler had already recorded, on the authority of the "De Origine," that Florence was rebuilt immediately after its pretended destruction by Totila, he thought that date premature, seeing that Florence really remained for long after in a very desolate and obscure condition, and therefore, to save trouble, he also jots down the posterior legend attributing instead the reconstruction of the city to Charlemagne, the saviour of the Empire.

What germs of truth can be gleaned from all this? Totila really entered Tuscany in 542, and sent part of his host to besiege Florence. Justin, the commander of the Imperial garrison there, then sought aid from Ravenna; and when the relieving force approached the city, Totila raised the siege and withdrew towards Sienna. Pursued by the Imperial troops, he succeeded in routing them, but instead of returning against Florence, directed his march towards Southern Italy. So at least runs the account given by Procopius, and also followed by modern writers.[3] The Goths, it is true, made another descent later, easily mastered Tuscany and Florence, and committed much cruelty there,

[1] Villani, ii. 1 and 2, and also the "Chronica de Origine Civitatis."
[2] Ibid., ii. 1, 2, 3.
[3] *Vide* Hodgkin, "Italy and her Invaders," vol. iv. p. 446 and fol.

though without destroying the city. These are the facts; all the rest was a legendary excrescence signifying that the Florentines endured a long period of obscurity and oppression, and only began to emerge from it in the time of the Franks.

In fact, the Longobard occupation of Tuscany took place towards 570, and we have two centuries of utter darkness. We find mention of one *Gudibrandus, Dux civitatis Florentinorum*, appointed by the conquerors; but nothing else is known to us. Amid the many calamities wrought by invasion, war, and harsh tyranny, not only was the trade, to which Florence owed its existence, entirely ruined, but many families escaped from the plains to safe places among the hills, and a good number accordingly took refuge in Fiesole, which city profited as usual by the ill fortune of Florence. And this to so great an extent, that during the latter half of the eighth century we find documents alluding to Florence as though it had become a suburb of Fiesole.[1] But soon, beneath Charlemagne's rule, times of greater order and tranquillity were inaugurated. Men began once more to forsake the hills for the valley; Florence began to prosper at Fiesole's expense. And as the Franks replaced the Longobard dukes by counts, so Florence too had its count, exercising jurisdiction throughout the territories of the bishopric that had been carved out of the old Roman division. This was the so-called *contado fiorentino*, stretching on the one side to a place called I Confini, near Prato, and thence towards Poggio a Caiano, sweeping round by the Empoli district, and conterminous with the borders of Lucca, Volterra, and the *contado* of Fiesole.[2]

[1] Lami, "Lezioni," pt. i. p. 293. From documents here quoted it would seem that Florence was included, as it were, in the *city of Fiesole;* and therefore some of the Florentine churches were recorded as being in Fiesole. *Vide* also pt. ii. p. 429 of the same work.

[2] This is described in detail by Lami, Borghini, and Hartwig.

Charlemagne halted in Florence, and celebrated Christmas there in 786; he likewise defended the property of the Florentine Church against Longobard aggressions. This gave rise to the legend that the rebuilding of the city was his work. Regardless of anachronisms, Villani not only adds that many imaginary privileges were conceded by him, but attributes to this period the birth of the Commune which only took place several centuries later. "Charles," he tells us, "created many knights, and granted privileges to the city by rendering free and independent the Commune, its inhabitants, and the *contado*, with all dwellers therein, for three miles round, inclusive of resident strangers from other parts. For this reason many men returned to the said city, and framed its government after the Roman mode, namely, with two consuls and a council of one hundred senators." [1] But this addition is made by the chronicler, and in a more arbitrary way than the legend itself.

Nor was this all. Not Charlemagne only, but likewise Otho I., the regenerator of the German Empire, must be necessarily the patron of Florence, "because," continues the chronicler, "it had always appertained to the Romans and been faithful to the Empire." [2] In the year 955 the emperor halted in Florence on the way to Rome for his coronation, and on this occasion the chronicler makes him grant the city a territory of six miles in extent, that is, one as big again, but no less imaginary, than that bestowed by Charlemagne. Villani goes on to relate how Otho established peace in Italy, overthrew tyrants, and left many of his barons settled in Lombardy and Tuscany, the Counts Guidi and Uberti among the rest. He fails to reflect that some of these Tuscan families were of much earlier origin, and that even in his own day the leading nobles of the *contado* bore the name of Cattani Lombardi,

[1] Villani, iii. 3. [2] Ibid., iv. 1.

in remembrance of their Longobard descent. Also, he again forgets that Florence was not then a free city to whom the emperor could concede a portion of territory, which, as we have seen, already belonged to his own jurisdiction, and, towards Fiesole at least, could not possibly be of six miles in extent.[1]

Another fabulous narrative, also given by Villani, is that of the destruction of Fiesole in 1010. On the day of St. Romolo's feast the Florentines, bent on revenge, are supposed to have entered the rival city with arms concealed under their clothes, and suddenly drawing their weapons and summoning comrades hidden in ambush, to have rushed through the streets, seizing everything and destroying all houses and buildings excepting the bishop's palace, the cathedral, two or three churches, and the fortress, which refused to surrender. After this, safety was promised to all disposed to migrate into Florence, and many profited by the offer. Thus the two peoples were made one, and even their flags united. That of the Florentines bore the white lily on a red field, that of Fiesole a demi lune azur on a white field; and thus was formed the red and white banner of the Commune.[2]

According to Villani this union of two separate peoples proved the chief cause of the continual wars by which Florence was harassed, together with the fact of the city being built "under the sway and influence of the planet Mars, the which always leads to war and discord." Then again, as though forgetting he had already made the same statement regarding the times of Charlemagne, he repeats the almost equal anachronism that the Florentines "then made common laws and statutes, and lived under the rule of two consuls and a council of senators, consisting of a hundred men, the best of the city, according to the

[1] Lami, "Lezioni," at preface to pts. cvi.–viii; Hartwig, i. 85, 86.
[2] Villani, iv. 6.

custom introduced in Florence by the Romans."[1] It is plain that he does not know how the Commune arose, but feels persuaded its origin was derived from Rome, and therefore records the fact as having occurred at the moment suiting him best, or seeming least improbable. But it is hard to see why he assigned the war and destruction of Fiesole to the year 1010 when aware that those events occurred, on the contrary, in 1125, as he afterwards relates in due place. The most probable explanation is, that finding the legend gave an account of the war and overthrow of Fiesole *more than five hundred years* after the destruction of Florence by Totila, whose invasion occurred *five hundred years* after the city was founded, the chronicler described the destruction twice over, namely, in 1010 and 1125; thus following first the legendary account, which had retraced its steps in a very vague fashion, and next the historical account, commonly known in his day. As for the causes of civil war being derived from the forced junction of two hostile nationalities, it may be observed that the diversity between the Germanic strain in the nobility and the Latin blood of the people, really constituted a strong element of discord, and this may have been felt, if not understood, by the chronicler.

It is certain that from the Frankish times downward the prosperity of Florence slowly but surely increased. Nevertheless it is true that, as Villani says, its whole territory bristled with the castles of feudal barons of Germanic descent, all hostile to Florence, and many of whom, safely ensconced on the neighbouring hill of Fiesole, were always ready to swoop down on Florentine soil.

In spite of this the geographical position of the city, on the road to Rome, proved increasingly advantageous to its commerce. As early as 825 the *Costitutiones olonenses* of the Emperor Lothair proposed Florence, with

[1] Villani, iv. 7.

seven other Italian cities, as the seat of a public school, thus attesting its importance even at that date. Besides, the German emperors nearly always halted there on their way to coronation in Rome. More often, and for longer periods, the Popes made sojourn there, whenever—a by no means uncommon occurrence—popular disturbances expelled them from Rome. Victor II. died in Florence in 1057, and had held a council there two years before; in 1058 Stephen IX. drew his last breath there; three years later Nicholas II. and his cardinals stayed in the town pending the election of Alexander II. Full of Roman traditions and monuments, in continual relation with the Eternal City, Florence was subject to its influence from the earliest times, and showed the Guelph and religious tendencies afterwards increasingly prominent in the course of her history. Towards the close of the tenth century many new churches arose within and without the city walls. At the beginning of the eleventh century the construction of an edifice such as San Miniato al Monte, in addition to the other churches built about the same period, affords indubitable proof of awakening prosperity and religious zeal. In fact, Florence now became one of the chief centres of the movement in favour of monastic reform that, after its first manifestation at Cluny, spread so widely on all sides. St. Giovanni Gualberto, of Florentine birth, who died in 1073, inaugurated the reformed Benedictine order known by the name of Vallombrosa, in which place he founded his celebrated cloister, and subjected many of the monasteries near Florence to the same rule.

Before long this religious and monastic zeal burnt so fiercely in Florence, that when its bishop, Pietro da Pavia, was accused of simony, all the people rose against him. The friars declared that he owed his high office to the favour of the emperor, and of Duke Goffredo and Beatrice his wife, and that he had bought their pro-

ATTACK ON THE MONKS OF S. SALVI.

Bas-relief by Benedetto da Rovezzano *in the National Museum, Florence.*

tection at a very heavy price. The multitude sided with the friars, and the quarrel was carried on for five years (1063–68), and with so much heat as to lead to bloodshed. The bishop, enraged by these accusations, and emboldened by the duke's favour, caused an armed attack to be made on the monastery of San Salvi near Florence. The first promoter of the religious movement, St. Giovanni Gualberto, was, fortunately for him, elsewhere at the time; but his altars were pillaged and several of his monks injured. This incident naturally added fuel to the fire, and St. Giovanni Gualberto, who had already inflamed men's minds by preaching in the city streets, now cast aside all reserve, and openly declared that no priests consecrated by a simoniacal bishop were real members of the clergy. The popular excitement rose to so high a pitch, that it is asserted that about a thousand persons preferred to die unassoiled, rather than receive the sacrament from priests ordained by a bishop guilty of simony.[1] Strange though it seem, this was by no means incredible in times of earnest religious faith!

Pope Alexander II. vainly endeavoured to pacify the people; vainly sent the pious, learned, and eloquent St. Pier Damiano to achieve that end. The holy man came with the words of peace, afterwards repeated in his letters addressed to *Dilectis in Christo civibus florentinis.* He censured simony, but likewise blamed too easy credence of the charge. It were better, he said, for the Florentines to send representatives to the Synod in Rome, whose authority would decide the quarrel; meanwhile they must remain quiet, without yielding to the blind and heinous illusion that had left so many to die without the "sacraments" to their souls' peril. Woe to those who seek to be juster than the just, wiser than the wise. Through too great zeal, they end by joining the foes of the

[1] It is related by St. Pier Damiano in the letter quoted farther on.

Church. Croaking even as frogs (*velut ranae in paludibus*), they throw everything into confusion, and may be likened to the plague of locusts in Egypt, since they bring equal destruction on the Church.[1]

This movement much resembled that carried on about the same time by the Patarini in Milan against the simony of the archbishop. There too, as in Florence, St. Pier Damiano played the part of peacemaker, and there also many preferred to die unassoiled, rather than take the sacrament from simoniacal priests.[2] But, despite the resemblance of the two insurrections, they led to different final results, owing to the different conditions of the two cities, and the very diverse attitude respectively assumed towards them by the Court of Rome. At any rate, the exhortations of St. Pier Damiano had no effect in Florence. The Vallombrosa monks sent representatives to Rome, but only to declare before the Council, then in session, their readiness to decide the question by appeal to the judgment of God. Not only was their proposal rejected by Pope and Council, but they were also severely censured for suggesting it, although the Archdeacon Hildebrand, there present, who had already risen to great authority in the Church, tried to defend them, as he had previously defended the Patarini of Milan. The Council ordered the monks to withdraw to their monasteries, and abide in them quietly, without daring again to inflame minds already unduly excited. St. Giovanni Gualberto would have obeyed willingly now; but it was too late: he could no longer quell the storm he had raised. For when the populace heard of what the monks had proposed in Rome, they insisted on the ordeal by fire. The

[1] Petri Damiani, "Epistolarum libri viii." Parisiis ex-officina nivelliana, 1610, *vide* p. 727. The epistle (p. 721 and fol.) is addressed: "Dilectis in Christo civibus florentinis, Petrus peccator, monachus, fraternae charitatis obsequium."

[2] Tocco, "L'Eresia nel Medio Evo," bk. i. chap. iii. pp. 207–228.

champion chosen for the purpose, already prepared and impatient to stand the test, was a certain Brother Pietro, of Vallombrosa, afterwards known by the name of Pietro Igneo, who, according to some writers, had been cowherd to the monastery, although others assert him to have belonged to the noble family of the Counts Aldobrandeschi of Sovana. Guglielmo, surnamed Bulguro, of the Counts of Borgonuovo, offered the monks a free arena for the ordeal, close to the Abbey of San Salvi, in his patronage, at Settimo, five miles from Florence.[1] The bishop, however, not only rejected the challenge with indignation, but obtained a decree to the effect that whoever, whether of the Church or the laity, should refuse to obey his authority, the same would be seized, bound, and *not led, but dragged* before the chief of the city.[2] Like-

[1] Passerini, "Arch. Storico Italiano," New Series, vol. iii. pp. 43, 44; Perrens, i. 85 and fol.; Hartwig, i. 88, 89; Capecelatro, "Vita di S. Pier Damiano," bk. vii. two vols. Florence: Barbera, 1862.

[2] "Ad hec ille se inquit, neutrum jubere, neutrum velle, neutrum recipere. Quin etiam edictum a Preside per legatos suos impetravit, ut quicumque laicorum, quicumque clericorum se ut episcopum non coleret suique imperio non obediret, ad Presidem victus non duceretur, sed traeretur: si quis autem his minis territus, de civitate fugeret, ad dominium Potestatis assumeretur quicquid possedisset." Thus runs the letter dated *Millesimo lvii idus februari*, and beginning, "Alexandro prime sedis reverentissimo, ac universali episcopo, clerus et populus Florentinus sincere devotionis obsequium." It was repeatedly, but incorrectly printed (*vide* Brocchi, "Vite di Santi e Beati," p. 145. Florence, 1742; "Acta Sanctorum," iii. luglio, pp. 359, 379), in the two lives of St. G. Gualberto; included in the Laurentian Cod. xx. 22, in sec. xi. The letter placed at the end of the Codex itself is written in a different and somewhat later hand; but, according to the opinion of Prof. Paoli, who examined it at my request, the writing has every characteristic of the eleventh century, "and could not possibly be of later date than the first half, or rather first quarter of the twelfth century." It more resembles a narrative in an epistolary form than a genuine letter. The title given it in the Codex also supports this view: "Incipit textus miraculi quod Dominus," &c. We shall have to recur to the subject later on.

At any rate, it is plain that the *Potestas* above mentioned has no relation with the Podestà of a later period. Here the term signifies *superior authority—i.e.*, that of the Duke Goffredo. The *Preside* I consider to mean Goffredo's representative in Florence. Both are old-fashioned, rhetorical terms, similar to those afterwards employed by Sanzanome.

wise the goods of all persons having fled in alarm were to be confiscated by the *Potestà*, that is, by Duke Goffredo, who favoured the bishop. Meanwhile, certain rebellious ecclesiastics who had sought refuge in an oratory,[1] were driven from it by force. Naturally, these measures only increased the heat of the popular fury. Pietro Igneo declared his readiness to pass through the fire, and, if need be, alone. On February 13, 1068, an enormous crowd of men, women (some about to be mothers), old people, and children, set forth to Settimo, chanting prayers and psalms by the way. There, by the Badia, two piles of wood were fired, and, as related by one who claims to have witnessed the sight, the friar passed through the roaring flames miraculously unhurt. This aroused an indescribable enthusiasm; the sky echoed with cries of joy, and Pietro Igneo, though unscathed by the fire, was nearly crushed to death by the throng pressing round him to kiss the hem of his robe. With great difficulty, and only by main force, some ecclesiastics succeeded in rescuing him.[2] The news flew to Rome with lightning speed, and then, when all the details reached the Pope's ear, he was compelled to bow to the miracle. The bishop of Florence retired to a monastery; Pietro Igneo was named cardinal, made bishop of Albano, and worshipped as a saint after his death.

This reminds us of the other ordeal by fire proposed in Florence in 1498, and that led to Savonarola's martyrdom,

[1] The same letter, after narrating how certain persons, having taken refuge in an oratory, were threatened with expulsion, "extra Civitatem pellerentur," unless they made submission, also adds that those persons refused to obey. "Hincque factum est ut . . . municipal presid . . . illos extra emunitatem oratori . . . eiceret." The two abbreviated words in the Codex were printed in many different ways, changing the verb and often altering the whole phrase, to the reader's great confusion. Several colleagues I have consulted agree with my view, that the words should be rendered *municipale praesidium*.

[2] This description is also taken from the same document.

MIRACLE OF SAN GIVOANNI GUALBERTO.

Bas-relief by BENEDETTO DA ROVEZZANO *in the National Museum, Florence.*

shortly before the fall of the Republic, of which the birth and death would thus seem to have been preluded by similar events. For, albeit the account of the affair may have been exaggerated by party feeling and superstition, and although the terms of "Preside" and "Podestà" employed in the old narrative only indicate in a general way the ruling powers in Florence at the time, all shows that a new state of society had begun. We find that there was a Duke of Tuscany, a military president, apparently his representative in the city, and, what is more, a people which, though only appearing as a fanatic mob, is plainly conscious at last of its own strength, since it struggles against the bishop, resists both the duke and the Pope, and finally obtains what it desires. In addressing the Pope it assumes the title of *populus florentinus*; and is addressed by St. Pier Damiano as *cives florentini*. It is true, of course, that these were mere forms of speech imitated from the ancients; assuredly the Commune was still unborn, and much time had yet to elapse before its rise; but an entirely new condition of things had begun, in which the elements conducing to its rise were already in course of preparation. Accordingly, we must now retrace our steps, in order to study the question more closely.

CHAPTER II.

THE ORIGIN OF THE FLORENTINE COMMUNE.[1]

I.

WHEN the Longobards became masters of nearly the whole of Italy, and subjected it to their long and cruel sway, they are known to have appointed a duke to every one of the principal cities they occupied. Rome remained free from them, having a Pope; Ravenna also escaped because an Exarch was soon to hold rule there, and almost all the cities by the sea were likewise exempted, inasmuch as the Longobards were ignorant of navigation, and needed assistance for their maritime trade. It was for the same reason that republics such as Venice, Amalfi, Pisa, Naples, and Gaeta, were of earlier origin than the rest. The dukes enjoyed great authority and independence; indeed, some of the duchies, especially on the borders, became so extended as to resemble small kingdoms—*e.g.*, the dukedoms of Friuli, Spoleto, and Benevento. This circumstance greatly contributed to the decomposition of the kingdom and to the fall of the Longobards, whose strength and daring were never conjoined with any real political capacity.

[1] The *Nuova Antologia* of Rome, June 1, 1890.

On the arrival of the Franks, counts took the place of dukes, but with less power and smaller territories. Charlemagne, with his genuine talent for statesmanship, refused to maintain lords who, in seeking their own independence, might endanger the existence of his empire. Nevertheless, as it was indispensable to keep his borders more strongly defended, he constituted *marches*, on the pattern of the greater Longobard duchies, and entrusted them to margraves, or marquises (*Mark-grafen*—frontier counts, marquises, or margraves). Thus too the marquisate of Tuscany was formed and the government centred in Lucca; for this city having had a duke of its own ever since the times of the Longobards, was already of considerable importance, while, as we have seen, Florence had fallen so low that the documents of the period merely refer to it as a suburb of Fiesole. Nearly all the margraves acquired great power, and aspired to still higher dignities. From their ranks in fact came men such as Hardouin and Berengarius, who, aspiring to form an Italian kingdom, became formidable opponents of the Empire, often wrought it much harm, and involved it in sanguinary wars.

Hence it is not surprising if, later on, the policy of the German emperors should have constantly aimed at the enfeeblement of the leading Italian counts and margraves, and, by granting exemptions and benefices to prelates or lesser feudatories, and making all benefices conceded to the latter hereditary estates, rendered these independent of all greater and more dangerous potentates. Therefore, particularly in Lombardy, this class rose to importance, and so, too, the political authority of the bishops, who in point of fact held the position of counts. But in Tuscany things took a different turn. Whether feudalism there, having smaller strength and power of expansion, seemed less formidable to the Empire; whether the country, being more distant, proved less easy to govern; or because a

strong state in central Italy was felt to be needed to arrest the growing power of the Papacy; whether the latter may have favoured its formation, as a possible check to the Empire; or again, as seems probable, for all these reasons combined, it is certain that the dukes or marquises of Italy (either title was borne by them) increased in power and consequence, and afterwards, in their turn, became a danger to the Empire. But in Tuscany the power of bishops and counts suffered more reduction than in Lombardy from the growing strength of the margraves, whose sway was extending on all sides, so that they sometimes appear to be virtual sovereigns of central Italy. The same reasons served to delay the rise of cities, and specially hindered that of Florence.

Already, from the second part of the tenth century, a Marquis Ugo, surnamed the Great, of Salic descent, ruled over Tuscany, the duchy of Spoleto and the *march* of Camerino. He reigned in Lucca almost in the guise of an independent monarch, and enjoyed the favour of the Othos. His successors continued to govern with much the same authority as the dukes of Benevento; and Bonifazio III. extended his State even to Northern Italy, thus giving umbrage to Henry III., whom he often outrivalled in cunning. Bonifazio being voracious for power, and of tyrannical temper, stripped many prelates, counts, and monasteries of their possessions, either to seize them in his own grasp or give them to better trusted vassals. He also tightened his grasp on all cities which, having risen to some importance, coveted increased freedom. This was specially the case with Lucca and Pisa. The former had prospered through being long the chief seat of the duchy, while the latter owed its prosperity to the sea, on which, as Amari happily phrased it, Pisa was already a free city, while still a subject city on land. Florence, however, still existed in humble obscurity, trading in

a small way, and girt about on all sides by feudal strongholds.

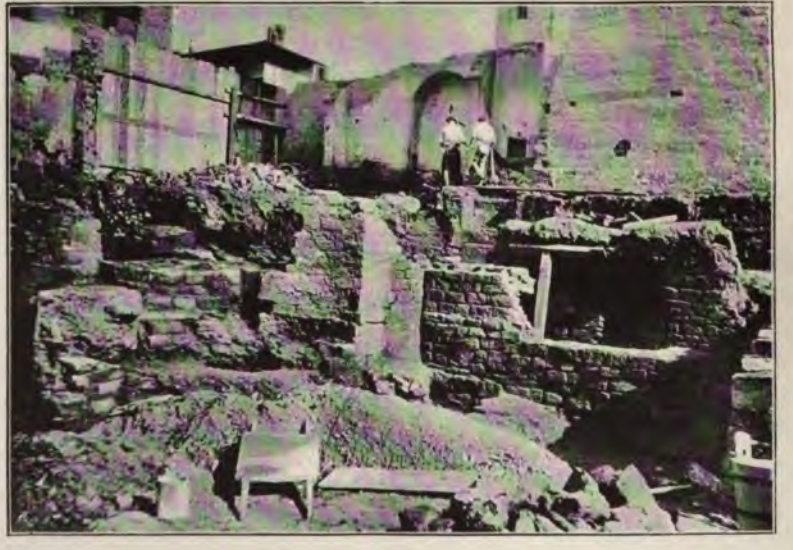
In 1037 Bonifazio had taken to wife Beatrice of Lorraine, who in 1046 gave birth to a daughter, Matilda, the celebrated countess or *comitissa*, as she is entitled by the chroniclers. After the death of Bonifazio, by assassination, in 1052, Matilda was soon associated with her mother in the government of Tuscany and of the whole duchy, and when left an orphan in 1076, became sole ruler of those extensive dominions. Beatrice had remarried, and as she was very religious, and her second husband, Goffredo of Lorraine, was brother to Pope Stephen IX., this served to increase their common zeal for the papal policy, afterwards so devotedly pursued by Matilda. When this high-minded, energetic woman became sole ruler, she held the reins of government in a firm grasp, and was often seen on battle-fields with a sword at her side. Her political position was one of great peril, for she was driven to take part in the fierce quarrel, recently begun, between the Church and the Empire. At first the great, high-tempered Hildebrand conducted the struggle as the inspiring genius of various Popes; later on, when raised to the pontifical Chair as Gregory VII., he fought in person against Henry IV. of Germany, and found Matilda his strongest and best ally. In this conflict, stirring and dividing all Europe, it was only natural that many opposing passions should be excited in Italy. All cities that, like Pisa and Lucca, considered themselves wronged by Duke Bonifazio, now declared for the Empire, and the Empire sided with them against Matilda. The same course was followed by all dissatisfied feudatories, especially by those whom Bonifazio had stripped of their possessions. More than once, it is true, Countess Matilda seized estates which had been arbitrarily alienated; but she seldom restored them to their original owners, pre-

ferring instead to bestow them on churches, convents, and trusty adherents of her own. This added fresh fuel to the flame. Hence an increasingly tangled web of opposing passions, of conflicting interests, from which at last some profit accrued to Florence. The Guelph spirit of the city and its commercial position, on the highway to Rome, had from the outset inclined it to the Church, and now, as a declared ally, was actively favoured by Beatrice and Matilda.

II.

It was long believed that Florence had had Consuls, and consequently an independent government, from the year 1102, since Consuls are mentioned in a treaty of that date, whereby the inhabitants of Pogna swore submission to the city. But it was difficult to reconcile this fact with the clearly proved dependence of Florence on Countess Matilda at the time. It was afterwards ascertained that the document in question bore a wrong date, and that the correct one was 1182, when the submission of Pogna really took place. Accordingly, the independence of the city was transferred to after 1115, the year of the countess's death. But it was still difficult to explain the wars previously carried on by the city on its own account, and other events of a like nature. The fact is that no fixed year can be assigned to the birth of the Florentine Commune, which took shape very slowly, and resulted from the conditions of Florence under the rule of the last dukes or marquises. We have already recorded the popular riots of 1063–68 against the bishop Mezzabarba, when accused of simony, and we have related how they ended with the ordeal of fire, braved by Pietro Igneo in 1068. On this head we have cited the letters of St. Pier Damiano addressed *civi-*

A ROMAN HYPO-CAUST, PARTLY RECONSTRUCTED.



EXTERIOR VIEW OF CALIDARIUM AND FURNACE.

bus florentinis. We also referred to a document [1] in which the *clerus et populus florentinus* made appeal to the Pope, and, in narrating what had occurred, mentioned a ***municipale praesidium***, a *praeses* of the city, and a superior *potestas*. This proved, before all, that the civic body of the period was already conscious of its personality, and that there was already an embryo local government within the city walls. Doubtless the supreme *potestas* was the Duke Goffredo, husband to Beatrice; the *praeses*, his representative in Florence. It was before him that, as we have seen, the bishop threatened to drag his adversaries, whose property was to be confiscated should they persist in disobedience. This *preside* commanded the *praesidium*, designated *municipal* even before the municipality had come into being, and at least the name shows that the majority of the *praesidium* must have consisted of citizens. But all this makes it equally plain that, while Florence was still an integral part of the margraviate, Roman forms, traditions, and ideas already prevailed there to the extent of assigning Roman names to institutions of feudal origin. We must pause to consider this fact, since it gave rise to a question, not only of form, but of genuine historical importance.

The employment of Roman terms need cause little surprise when we remember that the study of elementary Roman law, as well as of rhetoric,[2] the *ars dictandi* then formed part of the *Trivium*, and was therefore widely taught in Italy. In the first half of the eleventh century a still more advanced study of law already flourished at the school of Ravenna, and as its influence increased, extended through Romagna into Tuscany. This system of law seemed to spring to life again spontaneously from the midst of Latin populations, with whom it had never

[1] In the Laurentian Codex previously referred to.
[2] *Rhetor* was then synonymous with *causidicus*.

entirely died out, and now in its new vigour brought modifications and changes into the different institutions and legislations with which it came in contact.[1] In fact, in the sentences pronounced by Beatrice and Matilda, we find occasional quotations from the *Digesto*, or Code, that, according to the procedure of the time, was carried to the tribunals by those basing their rights on its clauses.[2] The works of St. Pier Damiano afford satisfactory proof that the Florentines pursued the same study, and set great value on Roman law. The saint mentions a juridical dispute of the Florentines, regarding which, towards the middle of the eleventh century, they had asked the opinion of the *sapientes* of Ravenna, who, much to his own disgust, presumed to alter the prescriptions of canonical law on the authority of the *Digesto*. Among those wise men, he adds, the most impetuous and subtle chanced to be a Florentine.[3] Another proof might be

[1] Ficker's work pays great attention to this point, and is also treated by Fitting. *Vide* "Die Anfänge der Rechtsschule zu Bologna." Berlin and Leipzig, 1888.

[2] "Lege Digestorum libris inserta, considerata." So styled in a *placito* of 1076, pronounced by an envoy of Beatrice at Marturi, near Poggibonsi ("prope plebem Sancte Marie, territurio fiorentino"), where the presence is also noted of Pepone, the precursor of Irnerius (Werner). A Florentine, who was contesting certain lands with the monastery, adduced the *temperis praescripto*, on the authority of the Digest, that, according to the legal custom of the time, he produced in court. *Vide* Fitting, op. cit., p. 88. Zdekauer, "Sull' Origine del manoscritto Pisano delle Panette Giustiniane." Sienna: Torrini, 1890. In a document of 1061, treating of a dispute between two Florentine Churches (*vide* Della Rena e Camici, vols. ii. 2, p. 99), we find "Indices secundum romanae legis tenorem, utramque ceperunt inquirere partem." According to Ficker, the judges in question were Florentines: "und zwar schienen das die gewöhnlichen städtischen Iudices von Florenz zu sein." Ficker, iii. par. 469, at p. 90. Goro Dati, a chronicler who died at the beginning of the fifteenth century, stated in his Chronicle that the Florence notaries were the best reputed of all, although the most celebrated doctors of law were those of Bologna. *Vide* Dati, "Storia di Firenze," Florentine edition of 1735, at p. 133.

[3] Petrus Damiani, "De parentelae gradibus," in his "Opere, Opusc," viii. chaps. i. and vii. He combats here the opinion expressed by the

deduced from the remark previously made by Ficker,[1] namely, that the courts held in Florence and its territory were seldom attended by the Romagnol assessors, or *causidici*, frequenting other Tuscan tribunals. This would seem to imply that in this respect Florentines had no need to recur to Romagna. Later—that is towards the end of the century—the school of Irnerius (Werner) began to flourish at Bologna, the which school aimed at an exact reproduction of Roman law and promoted its genuine revival. But at the time of which we speak the Ravenna school represented, on the contrary, a continuation of the ancient jurisprudence, partly decayed and partly changed by the diverse elements of civilisation in the midst of which it had survived, and in which it was now producing radical changes.[2] One of these changes—leading to very remarkable consequences of a political as well as a legal kind—took place in the constitution and attributes of the margravial tribunal.

We know that Matilda, after the fashion of her predecessors, administered justice in the name of the Empire, presiding in state over the tribunals. Indeed, this was one of her chief functions. Some sentences given by her

sapientes of Ravenna, in contradiction to the canonical law, as to the degrees of relationship prohibiting marriage. Touching a wise man he asserts to be a Florentine, he adds: "promptulus cerebrosus ac dicax, scilicet acer ingenio, mordax eloquio vehemens argumento."

[1] Ficker says, in mentioning the before-quoted document of 1061: "Diese Romagnolen scheinen nun weiter kaum nur zufällig zu Florenz gewesen zu sein."

[2] As regards the ever-increasing action of Roman law in Tuscany there is a very remarkable passage in the Pisan Statutes of 1161, in which it is said of that city, "a multis retro temporibus, vivendo lege romana, retentis quibusdam de lege longobarda." In a Siennese document of 1176, edited by Ficker (vol. iv. doc. 148), the Consuls declare: "Item nos professi sumus lege romana cum tota Civitate vivere." The mixture of Roman with Longobard or other legal systems is very frequent throughout the whole of the eleventh century, and even later on. Often, women who professed to live according to the Roman law, declared themselves at the same time as being under the *mundium* of their sons or of others.

have survived, and serve to show us how her tribunal was composed. Certain high feudatories had seats flanking her throne; next came the judges, assessors, pleaders (*causidici*), and witnesses, and lastly, the notary. Prof. Lami has observed that the judges, and more particularly the assessors, were changed as the countess moved from city to city, which would prove that not a few of them were inhabitants of the towns wherein they administered justice.[1] In fact, what names do we find among them in Florence? Those of the Gherardi, Caponsacchi, Uberti, Donati, Ughi, and a few others.[2] These were already the first and most influential citizens, the *boni homines*, the *sapientes*, the men we afterwards find officiating as Consuls. Thus there were certain families who first formed part of the margravial tribunal, and were afterwards at the head of the Commune.

Political changes were facilitated and prepared by a juridical change, followed by the increased action of the revived Roman law. What was the nature of this change? The exact definition of the functions respectively assigned by the Germanic code to the president of the tribunal who gave sentence, or to the judges who led up to the same by administering the law, had been gradually lost sight of. Sometimes the countess pronounced sentence without the aid of judges; but more often they conducted the trial, applied the law, and formulated the verdict, to which the countess merely gave assent. Thus, as Ficker states, her office was reduced

[1] Lami, "Lezioni," preface, p. cxv and fol. *Vide* also the documents published in Fiorentini's "Memorie delle gran Contessa Matilde" (Lucca, 1756); Della Rena e Camici, "Serie cronologica-diplomatica degli antichi duchi e marchesi di Toscana," pt. ii. These documents clearly show in what manner Matilda's tribunal was composed.

[2] *Vide* Fiorentini, doc. at p. 168; Della Rena e Camici, pt. ii. vol. ii. docs. xv. and xvi. pp. 106 and 108; vol. iii. p. 9; vol. iv. doc. xiv. p. 61.

DESCENT TO A ROMAN WELL.

Discovered beneath the Campidoglio, Florence

to that of a passive president.[1] This is confirmed on seeing that tribunals sometimes sat in her absence, when the trials were entirely managed by the judges. A method of this kind once adopted, Matilda's grave and numerous affairs of State, together with the continual warfare in which she was involved, must have augmented the number of the cases settled by local judges. This must have been a matter of weighty importance at a time when the administration of justice was one of the principal attributes of political sovereignty. Hence these citizen tribunals are a precursory sign of civic independence before the Commune had asserted its real autonomy and individual position. The strange dearth of documents certifying that any tribunal in Florence was presided over by Matilda during the last fifteen years of her life, serves to confirm our remarks. A similar fact is also verified in the Tuscan cities remaining faithful to the Empire; for these too had tribunals in which justice was administered, not by feudal potentates, but by citizens invested by the emperor with judicial authority.[2] These, too, served as a preliminary to communal independence, although hardly forming, as some thought, its actual beginning.

It is certain that in this and other ways, during the contest between Henry IV. and Matilda, many Tuscan cities, siding either with the Empire or the Church, and therefore highly favoured by the one or the other, were able to achieve a commencement of freedom. After Henry IV. had defeated Matilda near Mantua in 1081 he granted large privileges to Pisa and Lucca, in return for their proofs of goodwill to his cause. In a letter patent

[1] "*Unthätiger Vorsitzende*," says Ficker, when clearly proving this fact. Vol. iii. par. 573, p. 294 and fol.

[2] On this head Ficker remarks: "Dass schon früher die Gerichtsbarheit in der Stadt nicht durch die Feudalgewalt, sondern durch Bürger der Stadt als rechtskundige Königsboten geübt wurde." Vol. iii. par. 584, pp. 315–16.

issued at Rome June 23, 1081, he not only guaranteed to Lucca the integrity of its walls, but also authorised it to forbid the construction of any castles in the city or territory within a circuit of six miles, and promised to exempt it from building an Imperial palace. He likewise declared that no Imperial envoy should be sent to give judgment in Lucca, but made a reservation in case of the personal presence there of the emperor, or his son, or his chancellor. In conclusion, he annulled the "evil customs" (*perverse consuetudini*) imposed by Bonifazio III.[1] to the hurt of Lucca, and granted it full permission to trade in the markets of San Donnino and Capannori, from which he expressly excluded the Florentines. This final clause not only proves the hostility of the Empire to Florence, but the importance the latter's trade must have assumed by that time. In the same year Pisa received a patent guaranteeing the maintenance of its ancient rights, and Henry declared that no Imperial envoy belonging to another territory should be sent to plead suits within the walls, or within the boundaries of its *contado*. And, what was still more to the point, he also declared that no marquis should be sent into Tuscany without the consent of twelve *buoni uomini* chosen by the popular assembly, summoned in Pisa by sound of bell.[2] Here, if no Consuls

[1] "Consuetudines etiam perversas a tempore Bonifactii Marchionis duriter eisdem impositas, omnino interdicimus." Ficker, vol. i. par. 136, pp. 255–6, and the text of the document in vol. iv. pp. 124–5; Pawinski, "Zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Consulats in den Comunen Nord und Mittel-Italiens." Berlin, 1867, p. 29.

[2] "Nec Marchionem aliquem in Tusciam mittemus sine laudatione hominum duodecim electorum in Colloquio facto sonantibus campaniis." Murat., "Antiq." iv. 20. Also *vide* Ficker and Giesebrecht, before cited, and Pawinski at p. 31.

It has been suggested that some interpolations have been made in these patents (of which only an ancient copy survives, not the original), and especially in the second, but Ficker and Pawinski oppose this view. At any rate, the substance of both documents is now accepted by all the most competent writers. *Vide* Ficker, vol. iii. p. 408; Giesebrecht (4th ed.), vol. iii. pp. 537–8.

yet appear on the scene, we already find their precursors in these worthies, or *sapientes*, elected of the people, and we have already a popular assembly. Even though the Commune be still unborn, its birth is now, as it were, in sight. Further (provided nothing was interpolated in the document), it is most remarkable to find the appointment of an Imperial margrave subject to the sanction of the people. There is also a hinted desire—unattainable during Matilda's life—to assume the government of the margraviate in person; after her death an attempt to this effect was actually made, but, as we shall see, with very brief and partial success.

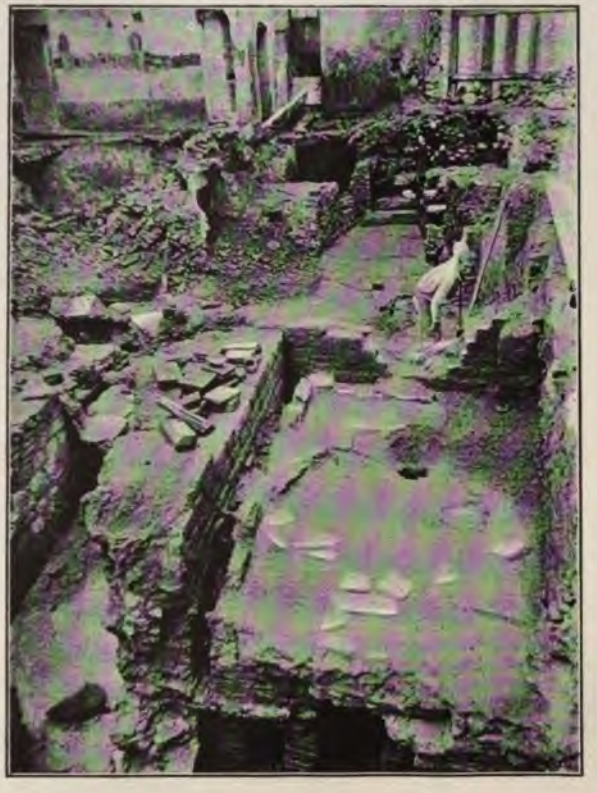
III.

Nevertheless the condition of Florence was considerably different from that of Pisa or Lucca. These two cities, as we have seen, had long enjoyed greater prosperity. They had often fought against each other; Pisa, haughty and daring by sea, had begun, even in the middle of the tenth century, a long and arduous war against the Mussulmans [1] of Sicily, Spain, and Africa. Florence, on the other hand, in siding with Matilda, became necessarily the foe of all the great feudal nobles of the *contado*, surrounding the city on all sides, and who, disgusted by their treatment at the hands of the marquises of Tuscany, since the time of Bonifazio III., now, for the most part, adhered to the Empire. Their antagonism towards the Florentines was not only heightened by the fact of these nobles being of Germanic origin, even as feudal institutions were Germanic, whereas the population of Florence, consisting chiefly of artisans, was of Roman origin and full of Roman traditions; but it was likewise

[1] Amari, "Storia dei Musulmani in Sicilia," vol. iii. p. 1 and fol.

increased by the geographical position of the city. Had Florence been situated in a plain like Pisa and Lucca, or like Sienna and Arezzo on a height, the feudal nobility could have promoted their interests better by settling within its walls. But it lay in a valley in the midst of a girdle of hills bristling with feudal turrets, whence the nobles threatened it on all sides, raiding its lands and closing all outlets for its commerce.

These geographical conditions had no slight effect on the future destiny of Florence; and, in fact, largely contributed to form the special character of its history. As a primary result, conflict between the feudal nobles and the city was more inevitable and more sanguinary than elsewhere, while the city being, from the first, of far more democratic temper than the rest, was therefore longer prevented from asserting its independence, since this result could only be achieved when Florence had gained sufficient strength to cope with the numerous enemies girding it about. Until that moment arrived its interests were best forwarded by remaining friendly and submissive to Countess Matilda, the only power able to hold the barons in check, and the loss of whose aid would have left Florence a prey to its foes. This explains not only the city's delay in asserting its independence, but also the total lack of documents concerning the origin of a commune that had already risen to considerable strength, and started wars on its own account before its existence was officially recognised. These wars were still carried on in the name of the Countess, who occasionally visited the camp in person; the city was unmentioned in public documents, because it had as yet no personal existence. Nevertheless, we are forced to recognise the first signs of its communal life in the campaigns undertaken by Florence in defence of its trade against the nobles of the *contado;* the which campaigns were continued on an



ROMAN CALIDARIUM, FLORENCE.

IMPLUVIUM OF ROMAN HOUSE, FLORENCE.

increasing and more vigorous scale until they ended in the total annihilation of the feudal lords. This was both the starting point and the aim of all Florentine history.

From the very beginning, it is true, we find that even Florence possessed some families that may be called noble. Such were the Donati, Caponsacchi, Uberti, Lamberti, and others whose names were included on the lists of the judges and soon to be found on those of the Consuls. These were the ruling, governing families at the head of the city. But they were neither counts, marquises, nor dukes; they were not as the Counts Cadolingi, Guidi, and Alberti, who dwelt in the outlying territory or *contado;* nor did they belong to those *Cattani Lombardi* so called at the time, in remembrance of their Germanic descent. Rather than veritable nobles, they were "worthies" (*boni homines*), "great ones" (*grandi*),[1] owning no feudal titles; natives of the city risen to high fortune, or scions of petty feudal lines, who, unable to hold their own against greater neighbours of the country side, had sought safety within the town. They quickly amalgamated with the people, sharing and taking the lead in all the latter's expeditions against the strongholds outside the city. Nor, as will be shown, was it a rare case, later on, to find some of these nobles engaged in trade, or heads of trade guilds, as soon as the latter became more firmly established. And it is by no means an insignificant fact that during disturbances at Pisa, Sienna, and elsewhere, we often see the names of real citizen-nobles, counts, viscounts, and so on, never to be met with in Florence. In documents concerning the Florentines the word *nobiles* seldom occurs, whereas it is often used in speaking of the Pisans, Siennese, &c.

[1] We use the word *grandi* here for the sake of clearness, although in this particular sense it only came into general use in Florence at a later date, and more particularly in 1293 in the days of Giano della Bella.

The term *milites*, it is true, frequently occurs in Florentine records; but although the *milites* could not be *popolani*, since the lower classes were not then admitted to knighthood, neither could they be feudal nobles in Florence: they were the leading citizens who exercised no trade, the *grandi*, in fact, to whom we have previously alluded. They were members of Matilda's courts, were employed by her in various ways; they commanded the *municipal praesidium*, probably filled the office of *praeses*, and they were leaders of the army. Richer, more cultivated and better fitted than other citizens for politics and warfare by their freedom from daily toil, they were the *boni viri*, the *sapientes*, the *milites* found more or less in all cities, but of a separate stamp in Florence.

Notwithstanding our knowledge of this *preside* and *presidio* and of these Florentine tribunals, very little is known as to the government and administration of the social body already beginning to prosper and to have varied interests of its own. Matilda's sway in Florence must have been of a shadowy kind, when the city was able to start wars on its own account and to its own profit, albeit still undertaken in her name. As its commercial prosperity increased and Matilda became more absorbed in her struggle with the Empire, the city must have been left more to itself. Consequently this is the time when the associations serving to classify and organise the citizens were formed, which we presently find flourishing and strongly established. Thus, being almost without a central government, a local one could assert its existence, and the strength of the Commune be developed long before its independence was proclaimed. The same fact explains why the Commune, its individuality once declared, should have made such rapid progress and leapt to the headship of Tuscany. At any rate, by the second half of the twelfth century we find

on the one side the *grandi*, or nobles—if we prefer to give them that name—formed in Societies of Towers (*Società delle torri*), with statutes soon to be made known to us; while, on the other we find trade guilds or associations not only in existence, but sometimes with sufficient political importance to entitle them to the honour of representing the Republic. Can we possibly suppose that such results could be achieved without a long, preliminary course of preparation? Did not the *scholae*, progenitors of the guilds, survive during the Lower Empire and throughout the Middle Ages? do we not find them dividing all society, including both the soldiery and foreigners in Rome and in Ravenna? How could they be destroyed by barbarians ignorant of crafts which were nevertheless indispensable to their own needs?

Florentine commerce and industry undoubtedly increased during the rule of Countess Matilda. This has been proved by the patent of 1081, and the first wars undertaken by the Florentines in the interest of their trade afford sure confirmation of the fact. Were we to exclude trade associations from the conditions of the period, we should have to admit the existence, at that day, of the modern workman, isolated and independent: a decided impossibility in the Middle Ages. Those were times in which every trade was exercised by distinct groups of families, and handed down by them as a tradition from father to son. Frequently, even offices of the State were the monopoly of certain families. It was from a society split into groups and castes that the Commune eventually developed the modern State, but in old times the very idea of the latter was unconceived. It is absurd to suppose—though a few writers accept the notion—that the guilds only began when they had regular statutes. These statutes only formulated what had already

existed for some time, and undoubtedly in Florence everything conduces to the belief that the associations of the trades and of the towers, though still embryonic, must have preceded the formation of the Commune evolved in their midst.

IV.

For on all sides, if in diverse modes, we perceive that a long period of incubation was needed to form the Commune, which naturally owed its birth to pre-existing elements. The celebrated agreement or *concordia* made at Pisa by Bishop Daiberto, about 1090, or even, perhaps, a year or so earlier,[1] shows that the nobles were organised and waging fierce war against one another from their towers. The bishop induced them to partly demolish these towers, and solemnly vow never to carry them above the height of thirty-six braccia (about one hundred feet), as previously decreed by the patent of Henry IV. in 1081.[2] And the agreement proceeded to set forth that any man believing his houses to have been unjustly damaged was to bear his complaint *ad commune Colloquium Civitatis;* nor could the dwelling of the offender be demolished without the general consent of the citizens.[3]

The whole tenor of this document not only proves that the Pisan nobles were already an organised body, but that they also boasted a civic importance never attained by the nobles of Florence.[4] Evidently Pisa had no Consuls as

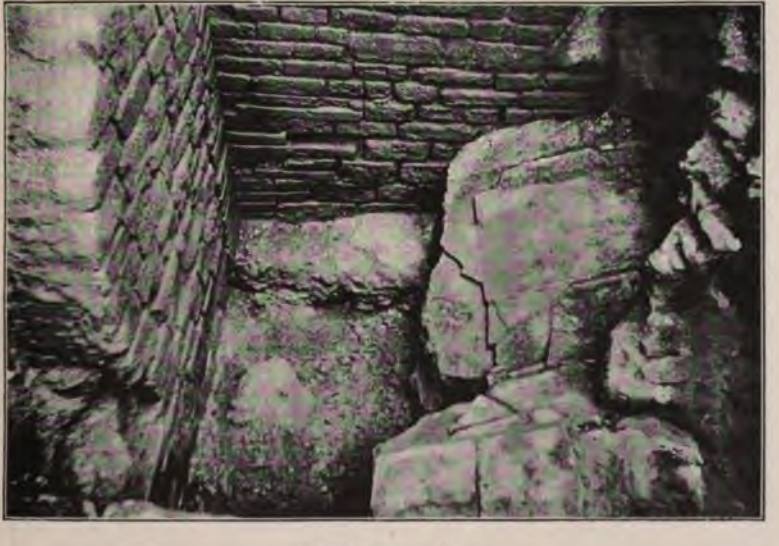
[1] Pawinski, p. 31, note 3.

[2] "Nec domum in predictis terminis relevari, neque ad triginta sex brachia interdici, permittemus" (Pawinski, p. 34).

[3] Bonaini, "Statuti inediti della città di Pisa," vol. i. p. 16.

[4] Frequent mention is made of counts and viscounts of whom, so far, there was no record in Florence. Later on, from causes that will be related, some few were found there.

MOUTH OF ROMAN FURNACE.
Discovered beneath the Mercato Vecchio.



CALIDARIUM. *Ibid.*

yet, or they would have been certainly mentioned in the document. But all the elements destined to make it a far more aristocratic commune than that of Florence were already existent.[1] We see that there was a *commune consilium* of *sapientes* or *boni homines*, which was a species of senate, and a *commune colloquium*, a general assembly of all the citizens, afterwards developing into a parliament or *arrengo*. Five *sapientes*, whose names are given, sat in council with the bishop.[2] These were the immediate precursors or, as Pawinski rightly calls them, the *vorbilder* of the Consuls, who are actually mentioned shortly after this time, in 1094, in another agreement (*concordia*), also drawn up by Daiberto. He makes an explicit appeal to their authority (*huius civitatis consulibus*) in decreeing that all smiths engaged on work required for the Duomo should be left unmolested.[3] Thus

[1] But I cannot agree with Pawinski when, in noting this characteristic of Pisa and other similar communes, he neglects the popular, commercial element, that even in Pisa, as elsewhere, was very influential, and considers that the birth of the Italian Commune should be solely attributed to the nobles.

[2] "Nisi fortitan communi Consilio Civitatis, vel maioris partis Bonorum vel Sapientum . . . ad commune Colloquium Civitatis . . . supradictorum hominum consensu et omnibus Pisae habitantibus" (Bonaini, op. cit., vol. i. p. 16).

[3] Murat., "Antiq.," iii., 1099. A poem attributed to Guido da Pisa narrates the campaign of 1087 carried on by the Pisans, in alliance with Genoa, Amalfi, and Rome, against the Saracens in Africa, and cites the names of four Pisans:—

"Vocat ad se Petrum et Sismundum
Principales Consules,
Lambertum et Glandulfum
Cives cari [clari ?] nobiles."

This, however, is a poetical work, and in order to accept it as a proof that these Consuls existed in 1087 it would be necessary to carry back to that year, at least, the first *concordia* of Bishop Daiberto. This might not be impossible, seeing that he held the bishopric from 1085 to 1092, when he was named archbishop. *Vide* Pawinski, p. 31, note 3. Leonardo

the rise of the Pisan Commune was preceded by a conflict waged by belligerent nobles from their respective towers, and the Consuls of the town were first named as the protectors of the smiths.

The existence of guilds in Venice as far back as the ninth century is certified by the Altino Chronicle, proving that, even then, there were some leading industries exercised by certain families only, and that humbler trades, or *ministeria*, were already constituted, as it were, in associations, the members of which pursued their avocation according to traditional and definite rules. These craft-guilds or *ministeria* implied certain accompanying obligations, since all members of them were bound to yield some gratuitous service to the State. On the other hand, the higher trades, such as mosaic work, architecture, and so on, requiring more culture and talent, were exercised by the leading families, and members of these guilds remained eligible for the political offices of the State.[1]

Vernese recounts the expedition to the Balearic Isles (1113–15) in his "Carmen," and says:—

> "Inde duo et denos de culmine nobilitatis
> Constituere viros, quibus est permissa potestas
> Consulis atque ducis."

But the existence of Consuls at that time has been already proved by other documents. *Vide* Pawinski, pp. 38–9.

[1] The chronicler designates the chief families as *anteriores*, possibly because they were the first to settle in Venice; he represents them as a supreme and governing class, and in the list he gives of them mentions what trades they carried on. "Cerbani de Cerbia venerunt, anteriores fuerunt de omni artificio ingeniosi. Signati (variant: Cugnati) Tribuni Ianni appellati sunt, anteriores fuerunt, mirabilia artificia facere sciebant caliditate ingenii. Aberorlini . . . anteriores fuerunt; non aluid operabantur nisi negocia, sed advari et increduli." And so on regarding other families exercising from generation to generation the same trade, commerce, or liberal profession. As to the guilds or *ministeria*, we find many expressions affording hints of their embryo organisation. "Hetolus autem appellatus est, quia ipse erat princeps de his qui ministerii erant retinendis." They were sadlers, cattle-herds, &c. Many more of these families are named in the list given in the Chronicle, and all seems to denote the continuation of a state of things that had existed during the lower Empire.

There is a document of the eleventh century showing that the guild of smiths was constituted under the rule of a *gastaldo* (or steward), against whom one of the members appealed for justice to the doge, according to a custom as yet unwritten.[1] All this compels us to believe that the existence of art and trade guilds, and in general of all the associations into which the citizens of the communes were afterwards divided, dates from a very remote period, and that in Florence, as elsewhere, all similar associations were constituted before the Commune had proclaimed its independence. Otherwise it would be impossible to explain the existence of a city that, almost without any visible government, was already prosperous in commerce and able to make war on its own account. For otherwise

[1] This document is in the Vatican (Urb. 440), and has also been examined by Gfrôrer. The ironsmith, Giovanni Sagornino, "insimul cum cunctis meis parentibus," appeals first to the Doge Pietro Barbolano (1026–31), and then to the Doge Domenico Flabiabico (1032–43), against the *gastaldo* of the guild, who sought to compel him to labour at iron-work for the prisons in the palace yard, whereas Sagornino asserted his right, according to custom, of making the iron-work at his own house, when fulfilling his gratuitous task for the State. A regular suit was carried on; and being decided in favour of the appellant, the latter was permitted to do the work in his own shop. All this proves that well-defined traditional customs prevailed before the guild possessed written statutes (sec. xiii.), since these would have been mentioned had they existed at the time.

The document we have quoted speaks at one point of the *gastaldo of the doge*, and at another alludes to him as the *gastaldo of the smiths*, because the director of the guild held his nomination from the doge. This is clearly evidenced in the thirteenth century by a decree (*promissione*) of the Doge Jacopo Tiepolo, dated March 6, 1229, and by another of the Doge Marco Morosini (June 13, 1249). Thus we see, on the one hand, how much the organisation of the Venetian guilds differed from that of the Florentine, while, on the other, we note how ancient and persistent in all Italian communes was the character of their institutions in general and of the trade guilds in particular. For the details given in this and the preceding note we are indebted to Prof. Monticolo, a man of great learning, and now engaged in important researches on Venetian history, of which the results will soon be published. Meanwhile we seize this occasion to express our thanks in print.

P.S.—We may now add that Prof. Monticolo has already begun to publish his discoveries in "Le Fonti della Storia d'Italia," issued by the Istituto Storico Italiano.

all the ensuing facts, although beyond the reach of doubt, would remain unexplained.

V.

Therefore, even in the days of Countess Matilda, we find the mass of the citizens divided and arranged in groups. We see on the one side the ancient *scholae* transformed into associations of arts and trades, containing the germ of future greater and lesser guilds; on the other, family associations and clans of the *grandi* or leading citizens, embryos of future societies of the towers. All these associations already formed the practical government of the city, in which the principal offices were filled by *grandi* of Matilda's choice. It is quite probable that the post of *preside* was reserved, in accordance with mediæval usage, to a single family or clan, perhaps to that of the Uberti, who were, as we shall see, among the most powerful in the city, and boasting a Germanic descent. Nevertheless, there was then no hostility, no separation between the great folk or *grandi* and the people, all being united by common bonds and interests. In fact, as we have said, there will be soon documentary evidence that some of the *grandi* engaged in commerce were chiefs of guilds, and already beginning to fight, side by side with the people, against the outlying nobility. It is true that they owned lands and herds, but these were then the main source of that Florentine trade and commerce in defence of which the first wars were undertaken. The castles surrounding the city barred all outlets for commerce; armed men were always swooping down from them to attack and maltreat all pack trains issuing from the city to convey its products and merchandise to neighbouring towns. With continual wars on her hands, the

Countess Matilda could seldom afford any help, and consequently the Florentines, although fighting in her name, were practically left to their own resources. It was this alliance of all classes of citizens, united by identity of interests and singleness of purpose against a common foe, that then constituted the strength of that Florentine people whose loyalty, purity, and valour were so fervently praised by Dante and the chroniclers. This was the moment when virtue laid the foundations of the Commune's future freedom and wealth.

Villani is given to exaggerate, but there is a basis of truth in his words when he states in the year 1107 (iv. 25) that "the city being much risen and increased in population, men, and power, the Florentines determined to extend their outlying *contado*, and widen their authority, and that war should be waged against any castle refusing obedience." This year, in fact, they began military operations by attacking the fortress of Monte Orlando, near Lastra a Signa, also described by the chroniclers as the castle of Gangalandi or Gualandi, a fief of the Counts Cadolingi,[1] then a very powerful family, and soon becoming bitterly hostile to Florence. During the same year they captured and demolished the stronghold of Prato, owned by the Counts Alberti, also very formidable enemies. But as on this occasion the Countess was present in the camp, their success is more easily explained.[2]

[1] Repetti, article on Gangalandi and Monte Orlando.

[2] "Dum in Dei nomine, Domina inclita Comitissa Matilda, Ducatrix, stante ea in obsedione Prati," &c. Anno 1107. *Vide* "Fiorentini," op. cit., bk. ii. p. 299. Villani, vol. iv. pp. 25 and 26; Hartwig, vol. ii. pp. 45 and 47; Repetti, art. "Prato"; "Arch. Stor. It.," Storie v. vol. v. disp. i., p. 108 and fol. Villani's narrative, however, is crammed with fantastic details concerning Prato. The destruction of Monte Orlando is not mentioned in vol. i. of the "Annales," which only begin with the year 1110; but is recorded in the Codex Neap. and in Tolomeo da Lucca.

In 1110 we hear of another war. "Florentini iuxsta Pesa comites vicerunt," we read in the "Annales," i. which start with this event and date it the 26th of May. The *comites* here mentioned cannot be the Counts Guidi, then on friendly terms with Matilda and Florence, although, when fighting against both at a much later date, they were specially designated as "The Counts." In 1110 Florence attacked and conquered the Cadolingi, also known as the *Cattani Lombardi*, whose lands extended from Pistoia, by the Val di Nievole, towards Lucca, and by the Lower Val d'Arno to the vicinity of Florence. If the city could rout these nobles, it must have acquired great strength, even admitting the probability that on this occasion also it had the aid of Matilda's troops.

In 1113 there were two other military campaigns which, owing to the very different accounts narrated by the chroniclers, have given rise to an infinity of learned disputes. First of all came the assault and destruction of Monte Cascioli, assigned by some to the year 1113, by others to 1114, and postponed by a few to 1119, when it was supposed to have been defended by an Imperial German vicar named Rempoctus or Rabodo, who perished in the fight. Other chroniclers assign the overthrow of the castle to three different years, and Villani puts a climax to the confusion by jumbling together the various assaults described, assigning them all to 1113, and saying that the castle had revolted against Robert the German, vicar of the Empire, holding residence at San Miniato al Tedesco (iv. 29). But in 1113—that is, before the Countess's death—there was no Imperial vicar in Tuscany, and consequently none could be installed at San Miniato, to which the appellation "al Tedesco" was not yet applied. But the confusion can be cleared, the chroniclers made to agree, and the different narratives easily explained, if it is admitted that only the first attack upon Monte

Cascioli took place in 1113, when the castle was held by the Cadolingi and could be vigorously defended.[1] As the walls on that occasion were only partially destroyed, it was necessary to renew the assault in 1114, when they were totally demolished. They were afterwards rebuilt by the Cadolingi, and therefore, in 1119, when Florence had achieved independence, two more attempts were made to capture the stronghold; the Imperial envoy was killed while assisting in its defence, and the building was finally demolished and burnt to the ground. But without anticipating events we may conclude that even before Matilda's death the Florentines had succeeded, by their expeditions against Monte Orlando, Prato, Val di Pesa, and Monte Cascioli, in opening the highways of Signa, Prato, and Val d'Elsa to their trade.

Another event, likewise occurring in the years 1113–15, although dated by the chroniclers in 1117, namely, the Pisan expedition to the Balearic Isles, also led to a somewhat complicated dispute. As already related, the Pisans began to make war on the Mussulmans from the middle of the tenth century, and during the latter half of the next century the strife was pursued more hotly than ever. In 1087 Pisa and Genoa combined, displayed a fleet of forty sail in battle array before Mehdia, and in 1113 both cities joined in the more important expedition to the Balearic Isles. They were also accompanied by many counts and marquises from Lombardy and Central Italy, likewise including a few from the Florentine territory.

[1] The "Annales fiorentini," ii., followed by Villani, merely relate the destruction of the castle in 1113, without any comments, for the next event they mention relates to the year 1135. The "Annales fiorentini," i., say nothing about it in 1113, and place the "secunda et ultima destruccio murorum" in 1114. In 1119 they record two other attacks on the castle, "quem marchio Rempoctus defendebat": by the second of which the Florentines "Monte Cascioli ignem (*sic*) consumpserunt." It seems clear that three attacks were made in succession, and farther dispute on the point would be superfluous.

Then, combining with the Counts of Barcelona and Montpellier, the Viscount of Narbonne, and others, they attacked the Balearic Isles, and, in spite of a very obstinate resistance, seized the castle of Majorca, and captured young Burabe, the last scion of the ruling dynasty there. Villani, in alluding to this war of 1113–15, assigns it, like the other chroniclers, to the year 1117, adding that the Pisans fearing, when about to set sail, that the Lucchese might, as once before, take advantage of their absence to attack their city, entrusted the Florentines with its defence. The latter immediately encamped two miles from the walls and forbade their men to enter Pisa, under penalty of death; for, seeing that scarcely any males were left in the city, they feared some attempts might be made on the honour of its women, to the grave discredit of Florentine loyalty. And this decree was rigorously enforced. One soldier who dared to violate the rules of discipline was condemned to death, notwithstanding the prayers of the Pisans, who, as the only chance of saving the man's life, protested that they could not permit a capital sentence to be executed on their territory. Whereupon the Florentines, showing even in this matter their scrupulous regard for others' rights, purchased a scrap of land, and there put the culprit to death.

Meanwhile, the Pisans returning from Majorca, laden with spoil, offered in token of gratitude to their faithful friends the choice of accepting either two bronze doors or two porphyry columns. The Florentines preferred the latter. The columns were consigned to them wrapped in scarlet cloth, in token of their value, and now stand in the chief portal of San Giovanni. However, when the cloth was stripped off, it was seen that some envious person had injured the columns with fire. Evidently part of this account is legendary, and we also discern that something must have been added to it afterwards, when

Pisa and Florence were separated by long and inextinguishable animosity.[1]

But the wrong date repeated in Villani and many other chroniclers, regarding a war that lasted several years, and was apparently only recommenced in 1117, does not justify us in denying a fact so constantly affirmed by many writers.[2]

[1] The "Annales," i. and ii., omit this event. The Neap. Codex assigns it, as does Villani, to the year 1117, but only says that the Pisans went to the Balearic Isles, and that "the Florentines guarded the city of Pisa" (Hartwig, ii. 272). The same account is given by Tolomeo da Lucca, but he dates the event in 1118; so, too, the pseudo Brunetto Latini, who records the gift of two porphyry columns, "by reason that the Florentines guarded their lands, while they were at the war," but adds nothing more to this statement. As to the error of date, we will merely remark that Capmany, in his "Memorias historicas sobra la marina . . . de Barcelona," vol. i. p. 10, after narrating the expedition of 1113–15, goes on to say that Raimondo Berengario III. came to Pisa and Genoa in 1118, in order to promote another campaign. Perhaps the remembrance of this visit contributed to the mistake, the which, once made, was repeated by many subsequent writers.

[2] Dr. Hartwig quotes particulars received from Dr. Wüstenfeld of a patent dated 1114, which would seem to show that the Florentines also took part in the expedition, in which case, he observes, the columns might have been the gift of the Pisans, and nevertheless part of the spoil taken in common. I caused a search to be made for the diploma in the Pisan Archives, and obtained it through the courtesy of Prof. Lupi. It is inserted in another patent, dated *vi. idus Augusti*, 1233, whereby King James of Aragon confirms the Pisans in the privileges conferred on them by the preceding diploma that "Berengarius Barchinione gloriosissimus Comes Pisanis fecit." This older patent is reproduced in the document, and bears this date: "M.C. quarto decimo . . . septimo idus septembris, indictione sexta." Although several other words stand between those of decimo and septimo, this mode of writing the date may have been another cause of the blunder committed by the chroniclers who dated the event in 1117.

Whatever may be thought of these very disputable theories, it is certain, on the other hand, that the privileges were conferred on the *populo pisano*, and that three of their Consuls were invested with them, and received "vice aliorum Consulum tociusque pisani populi," and that this concession was made "coram marchionibus, comitibus, principibus romanis, lucensibus, florentinis, senensibus, volterranis, pistoriensibus, longobardis, sardis et corsis, aliisque innumerabilis gentibus, que in predicto exercitu aderant." Therefore it was no mere alliance between one or two cities: it was the Pisan people in conjunction with many potentates from different parts of Italy. The chancellor of the Pisan Consuls drew up the diploma, in the presence of the Archbishop of Pisa,

The Balearic expedition certainly took place, and there is equal certainty that it was led by the Pisans, with the help of various friends and allies. Their fear lest the city should be attacked by the Lucchese in their absence was justified by the fact that this had really happened in former times. The Pisans were now foes of Lucca and friends of Florence, whose loyalty during that early period was very generally recognised. Why should it be incredible that these friendly Pisans should have entrusted the city to their care, or that they should have proved worthy of the confidence reposed in them? Paolino Pieri not only repeats the story as told by all the other chroniclers, but also adds that the bit of ground upon which the guilty soldier was executed had been purchased with the help of Bello the Syndic, and that even in his own day he saw that it was still left uncultivated in memory of the deed : " it was on the fourth day of July, three hundred and two years more than one thousand, when I saw that ground untouched." At any rate, this is a proof that the tradition of the fact still survived in the fourteenth century, and that every one had the fullest belief in it.

VI.

The death of Countess Matilda, in 1115, was followed by a period of so much disorder as to mark the beginning of a new era for all Central Italy, and more especially for Florence. The countess, as we know, left a will bequeathing all her possessions to the Church ; but this

" qui Dompni apostolici in predicto exercitu vicem gerebat," of two *vice comites* and nine Consuls, the names of the latter being given. This diploma had never been published in Italy ; therefore Amari, who was much interested in the subject, wished to print, just before his decease, the copy I had sent him, although he had ascertained that it was already published in Spain by Moragues y Bover in the notes to a " Historia de Mallorca," by Don Vincente Mut, printed at Palma in 1841.

donation could only affect her allodial estates, since all those held in fief naturally reverted to the Empire. It was not always easy to precisely distinguish these from those; often, indeed, impossible: hence an endless sucession of disputes. And such disputes became increasingly complicated by the pretensions of the Pope and the emperor, each of whom asserted his right to the whole inheritance, the one as Matilda's universal legatee, and the other as the supreme head of the margraviate. Then, too, as we have seen, many considered themselves to have been unjustly deprived of their estates, in favour of others with no rightful claim. All this led to a real politico-social crisis that brought the disorder to a climax. Thereupon the emperor, Henry IV., sent a representative, bearing the title of *Marchio*, *Iudex*, *Praeses*, to assume the government of Tuscany in his name. Of course, no one could legally contest his right to do this; but the Papal opposition, the attitude of the cities now asserting their independence, and the general disorder split the margraviate into fragments. Accordingly the representatives of the Empire could only place themselves at the head of the feudal nobility of the various *contadi* and, by gathering them together, form a Germanic party opposed to the cities. In the documents of the period the members of this party are continually designated by the name of Teutons (*Teutonici*).[1]

Florence, surrounded by the castled nobility occupying her hills, could only decide on one of two courses. Either to yield to those who had always been her mortal

[1] *Vide* "Documenti che illustrano la memoria di una monaca del secolo xiii." ("Arch. Stor. It.," Series iii. vol. xxiii.). These documents are among the earliest of the thirteenth century, and contain the depositions of witnesses, alluding almost always to events of the twelfth century, and continually mentioning the monastery of Rosano, and of one who "defendit ipsum monasterium a Teutonicis" (*vide* pages 206, 391–2, and other parts also).

enemies, and were now emboldened by Henry's favour, or to combat them openly, and thus declare enmity to the Empire, the which, in the preesnt state of affairs, would amount to a proclamation of independence; and the latter was the course adopted. Florence was now conscious of her own strength, and recognised that safety could only be gained by force. The change was accomplished in a very simple and almost imperceptible way. The same worthies who had administered justice, governed the people, and commanded the garrison in Matilda's name, now that she was dead, and no one in her place, continued to rule in the name of the people, and asked its advice in all grave emergencies. Thus these *grandi* became Consuls of the Commune that may be said to have leapt into existence unperceived. This is why no chroniclers mention its birth, no documents record it, and a plain and self-evident fact is made to appear extremely complicated and obscure. In endeavouring to discover unknown events and lost documents which had never existed, the solution of a very easy problem was hedged round with difficulties, while evident and well-established particulars best fitted to explain it were entirely lost sight of.

Nevertheless, we are not to believe that the event was accomplished without any shock, for the change was of a very remarkable kind. It is true that the actual government remained almost intact; but its basis was altered, since it was now carried on in the name of the people, instead of that of the Countess. This, in itself, signified little, inasmuch as for some time past the city had been practically, if not legally, its own master, and the people beginning to feel and make felt its personality. But the social and political results of the change were neither few nor inconsiderable. Naturally, during Matilda's reign, the governing authorities were men of her choice; and although all official and judicial posts changed hands from

time to time, they became increasingly monopolised by a small cluster of families, chief among whom, as we have already said, were most probably the Uberti and their clan. Now, however, that the authorities were to be elected by the people, there was a broader, although still somewhat limited, range of choice. Accordingly, there was more change of office, and men were removed in turn from one to another. This custom already prevailed in other communes, and had been adopted even in Florence both by popular associations and those of the *grandi*. Hence it necessarily prevailed in the formation of the new government.

Nor can we believe that those always to the front in former times could have now withdrawn without resistance, or without attempting to maintain their position by favour of the Empire and the *Teutonici;* nor is it credible that those now entitled to a larger share in the government should have refrained from relying, in their turn, on the strength of the popular favour, backed by the most vital interests of the city. Friction between the leading families seems inevitable to us in this state of things, and Florence must have witnessed some such conflict as at Pisa in Daiberto's day, and in almost all other Italian communes. We learn from Villani (v. 30), from the "Annales," and many other works, that there was a great fire in Florence in 1115, a similar one in 1117, and that "what was left unburned in the first fire was consumed in the second." It was certainly an exaggeration to say that the whole city was destroyed, but the fact of the fire is generally affirmed.[1] We also know that in those times,

[1] The "Annales," i., record two fires (1115 and 1117), which destroyed the whole place; the Neap. Codex only mentions the second. Thomas Tuscus, writing in Florence about 1279, speaks of both the fires in his "Gesta Imperatorum et Pontificum," attributing to that cause the destruction of many chronicles which he supposes to have existed, but which probably never existed at all. Villani adopted the same theory,

before gunpowder was invented, fire and arson were the most efficacious weapons in popular riots. Villani says, farther, that "fighting went on among the citizens . . . sword in hand, in many parts of Florence." It is true, that, in his opinion, the fight was *for the faith*, seeing that the city being given over to heresy, licence, and the sect of the Epicureans, God therefore chastised it with pestilence and civil war. But, although we find no certain traces in history of any widely diffused heresy in Florence at the time, it is undoubted that from 1068 the earliest gleams of Florentine freedom were mixed and confused, as we have seen, with a religious movement, and it is also certain that the "Annales," i., of the year 1120 record the fact of one named Petrus Mingardole being condemned for heresy to the ordeal by fire,[1] and also add that, between 1138 and 1173, the city was thrice smitten by an interdict, all of which goes to prove a continued religious agitation. Besides, Florence, and particularly her people, remained constantly faithful to the Church party, while the Uberti and their adherents, who sided with the Empire, were opposed to it, and consequently, in those days, may have easily incurred the charge of heresy. Even in Villani's time the general name of *Paterini* was bestowed not only upon all heretics, but on Ghibellines as well.[2] Besides, as he had placed the origin

being equally unable to understand that the Commune might have had no historians of earlier date.

[1] Petrus f. Mingardole, who, "*ad defendendum se de crucifixo*," passed through the fire unhurt. Certain historians, unwilling to credit the existence of heresy in Florence at that time, have disputed as to the words *de crucifixo*, and proposed this reading instead: *cum crucifixo* or *de crimine infixo*. But the facsimile of the Codex, published by Prof. Paoli, leaves no doubt on the point.

[2] In fact, Simone della Tosa, a later chronicler, who may have copied from Villani at this point, after relating the second burning of the city in 1117, goes on to say that "the heresy of the *Paterini* was then abroad in Florence." Pope Innocent III. (1198-1216), in discoursing on heretics, wrote: "Impii Manichaei qui se Catharos vel Paterenos appellant"

of Florence before Charlemagne's day, and the imaginary destruction of Fiesole in 1010, immediately afterwards, he naturally refused to recognise that origin for the third time at the moment of the Commune's real birth. Accordingly, slurring over the political movement, that was undoubtedly the main factor in the change, he tried to exaggerate the religious movement that played a very minor part in it.

At any rate, since it appears certain that the Uberti asked the support of the Empire, they must have been now necessarily driven to prove themselves foes of the Church. Therefore, it cannot have been unusual for them to be styled heretics or *Paterini*, especially by so pronounced a Guelph as Villani. We know that the Uberti were already powerful in Matilda's time, from the frequent appearance of their name in contemporary documents. That they also enjoyed a lion's share of the government, and that the revolt was chiefly directed against them, is explicitly proved by the words of a chronicler—so far little read, we might almost say unknown—whose work being derived from different sources than that of Villani, shows some events in a new light. The pseudo Brunetto Latini, in fact, agrees with the other chroniclers in ascribing the first fire to the year 1115, saying that it began at the Santi Apostoli, and spread as far as the bishop's palace, "whereby the greater part of the city was burnt, and many folk perished in the flames." He says nothing concerning heresy, but touching the

(Ep. lib. x. ep. 54, in Migne's ed. vol. ii. p. 1147). Also, in the "Annales Camaldulenses" (vol. iii. app. p. 396) there is a sentence pronounced at Sutri, in 1141, running as follows: "Igitur universi qui vulgo Paterenses vocantur, eo quia, sub iugo peccati, retinebant omnia que de predicta ecclesia sancte Fortunate accipiebant." Therefore it is plain that the name of *Paterini* (although strictly speaking that of a special sect, quite separate from others) was here applied to all those occupying Church lands, or opposed in any way to the Church. Hartwig, vol. ii. pp. 17 and 21.

second fire of 1117, he adds: "In this year a fire broke out in Florence in the houses of the Uberti, who *ruled* the city, whereof little was saved from the burning, and many folk perished by fire and sword." [1] It is evident that there was a real outbreak, almost a revolution waged with fire and sword, against the Uberti, rulers of the city.

Can we be surprised at the hatred roused by the Uberti, or at the civil war of which they were the cause? As we know, they were traditionally supposed to have come with the Othos from Germany; and we have seen how the legend of the *Libro fiesolano*, while refusing credence to this, spoke of them as descended from "the most noble race of Catiline," the enemy of Florence. Even on historical evidence, were they not the forefathers of those Uberti, who afterwards, in 1117, proved the first to attack the Consular government and begin the civil warfare by which the city was so long torn asunder? Were they not the forefathers of the Schiatta Uberti, ringleaders of the band that stabbed Buondelmonti to death, by the statue of Mars on the Ponte Vecchio, in 1215? Were they not the ancestors of the celebrated Farinata, who routed the Guelphs at Montaperti, and attended that Council of Empoli where such fierce measures were proposed against Florence, the perpetual nest of the Guelphs—the same Farinata described by Dante among the heretics in the bog of hell? [2]

[1] *Vide* the Chronicle, *ad annum*. As we have already observed, all information regarding this period is derived from the Gaddi Codex, discovered in the Laurentian Library a few years ago. The part beginning from 1181 is also contained in the autograph Chronicle that has been longer known to us; but being very difficult to decipher has not been much studied.

[2] "Would to God that Ghibellines were declared to be *Paterini!*" So says the pseudo Brunetto Latini in the year 1215.

VII.

Meanwhile, which party conquered in the struggle following Matilda's death? Facts prove it clearly enough. In the year 1119 the Florentines made that final assault on the castle of Monte Cascioli, to which reference has been already made. This is the moment when the before-mentioned *Rempoctus*,[1] or Rabodo, really comes upon the scene, although Villani (iv. 29) and other chroniclers make him appear in 1113, under the name of Robert the German, Imperial vicar, and suppose him to have fallen in fight that year while defending the castle. We have shown that there could be no Imperial vicar in Tuscany at that date, seeing that none was sent until after Matilda's decease. In fact, no documents mention any vicar before then, and only on September 11, 1116, we find one recorded as "Rabodo ex largitione Imperatoris Marchio Tuscia,"[2] and then in 1119, "Rabodo Dei gratia si quid est,"[3] the identical formula that had been employed in Matilda's patents. In 1120 Rabodo's name disappears, and is replaced by that of the Margrave Corrado. It may therefore be taken for granted that Rabodo really perished in 1119 during the defence of Monte Cascioli against the Florentines, who now succeeded in finally demolishing the stronghold and burning it to the ground.[4] Thus their first achievement,

[1] The MS. of the "Annales," i., writes, *Rempoctus*, not *Remperoctus*, as it was printed elsewhere.

[2] Ficker, vol. ii. pp. 223, 224, par. 310; Murat., "Antiq.," iii. 1125.

[3] Murat., "Antiq.," i. 315.

[4] The "Annales," i., say that, "deo auctore, Florentini Monte Cascioli igne consumpserunt." The MS. really seems to run, *de auctore*, but this would be nonsense. Lami proposed the reading, *des auctoritate*, but this too would lack sense. The interpretation preferred and adopted by ourselves was suggested by Prof. Paoli. In combating the Empire and fighting for the Church, the Florentines believed themselves to be under Divine protection, and considering their adversaries as enemies of God, accordingly named them heretics and *Paterini*.

after Matilda's decease, was the destruction of a Cadolingi castle, together with the defeat and death in battle of the first Imperial vicar then established in Tuscany. This is more than enough to show the nature of their attitude with regard to the Empire and the Teutonic party.

Shortly after, an event of even greater significance occurred in the capture and sack of Fiesole during 1125. Sanzanome, whose so-called modern history of Florence starts with this war, describes it at much length, in flights of wordy rhetoric. The gist of it is that the chief cause of the conflict was a commercial dispute. The people of Fiesole would seem to have maltreated and plundered a Florentine trader who was quietly passing through the city with his goods. This incident, added to the remembrance of past rancours and other recent depredations, seems to have stirred the Florentines to war. Instantly, "factum est Consilium per tunc dominantes Consules de processu." One of the leading citizens harangued the people, beginning his speech with these words: "Si de nobili Romanorum prosapia originem duximus . . . decet nos patrum adherere vestigiis." Thereupon, "illico a Consulibus exivit edictum." A man of Fiesole, on the other hand, began his address by alluding to the legendary origin of his city: "Viri, frates, qui ab Ytalo sumpsistis originem, a quo tota Ytalia dicitur esse derivata." Although so much learned rhetoric in a writer of the early part of the thirteenth century is another proof of the strong influence of Roman tradition on ancient Florentines, both before and after the rise of their Commune, it cannot conceal the real cause of the war, as proved even by the evidence of Villani, whose chronicle begins to acquire greater historic value at this point. The latter relates that Fiesole had become a veritable nest of *Cattani* and brigands, who infested the

Florentine highways and territories.[1] As usual, the feudal barons were swooping down from their strongholds to hinder the trade and traffic of the Commune.

At this moment also there were special causes tending to provoke a war of an unusually sanguinary kind. The counties, or *contadi*, of the two cities, as sometimes occurred elsewhere, had been carved out of the territories of bishoprics, based, in their turn, on ancient Roman partitions of the soil. Accordingly, these counties being not only adjacent, but wedged in and almost tangled one with the other, and their respective bishops having never wielded, as in Lombardy, the authority or power of counts, they had ended by forming a single, combined jurisdicto n. In fact, many documents refer to the county or jurisdiction of Fiesole and Florence, as though it were one and the same thing. Hence it was only natural that on becoming an independent Commune, after Matilda's death, Florence should seek to dominate over both counties, and equally natural that Fiesole should be violently opposed to the idea, and, notwithstanding the inferior size of the town, should have trusted to the superior strength of its fortified position, and, making alliance with the nobles of the *contado*, should have harboured them in the citadel, and joined them in continual attacks on Florentine traders or in raiding Florentine lands. This was the beginning of the war. Its details are unknown to us, those supplied by Sanzanome being too extravagant for belief,[2] and other chroniclers furnishing none at all. Seeing the strength of Fiesole's position, the campaign could have been neither

[1] "Teneanla certi gentiluomini Cattani, stati della città di Fiesole, e dentro vi si riducevano masnadieri e sbanditi e mala gente, che alcuna volta faceano danno alle strade e al contado di Firenze" (iv. 32).

[2] According to the "Annales," i., the war lasted less than three months, while Sanzanome stretches it to three years. Possibly the latter included all the attacks and skirmishes by which the war may have been prefaced.

short nor easy, and undoubtedly ended in cruel slaughter and the almost total destruction of the town. The chroniclers are not the only authorities for this fact. Shortly afterwards, the Abbot Atto of Vallombrosa implored a pardon from Pope Honorius II., *pro Florentinorum excessibus*, urging in their favour that there were many aged persons, women, and children, in Florence, who had assuredly taken no part in the *destruccio fesulana*, and also that many participants in the war now confessed the error of their ways, and sincerely repented all the excesses that "non meditata nequitia commisere."[1] The event was long remembered in Florence, is frequently recorded in documents,[2] and, together with the rout of the Imperial vicar at Monte Cascioli, undoubtedly contributed to establish the independence of the Commune on a firmer basis.

VIII.

It is certain that Florence now had a separate government under Consuls of her own, although there is no documentary proof to this effect earlier than 1138. Sanzanome, however, makes explicit allusion to it at the time of the Fiesole campaign, when, as we have seen, war was declared by the Consuls. But what was the real nature and origin of this new magistracy? Formerly it was opined by many writers that the Consuls were an institution derived in general from the judges of older days. In Lombardy they would have been merely another form of the Frankish *scabini*, and accordingly

[1] Soldani, "Historia Monasterii S. Michaelis de Passiniano," p. 109, quoted by Lami, "Lezioni," i. 288.

[2] In Passerini's collection of documents, quoted above, one finds, at p. 211, the following words: "Domina Sofia dixit et dicit quod est lxxx. annorum et plus, et recordatur de destructione Fesularum." Others give testimony to the same effect.

in Florence it was natural to suppose them to be an altered survival of those judges of the margravial tribunal to whom, for some time before her death, Matilda had accorded the right to give sentence. But this view can be no longer maintained, since it does not comprise the whole truth of the matter. For even when the Consuls are seen in the exercise of their functions, what are they, what do they do, according to chronicles and documents? They conduct wars, conclude treaties in the name of the people, of whom they are the representatives; they govern the city; they administer justice. And at Florence, as elsewhere, the latter is only one of their duties, and only undertaken by them because so closely connected with the exercise of the political power that is, above all, their genuine and principal function. Besides, what was it that really led to the birth of the Florentine Commune? What save the lack of the higher political authority hitherto ruling Tuscany, and the necessity of making war against old and new foes! Accordingly the military and political elements unavoidably prevailed.

We are further confirmed in this idea by examining the constitution of the Consular bench. At first it would seem that all or some of the Consuls presided without distinction, while later, three members were chosen in turn, and entitled *Consules super facto iustitiae*, or even *Consules de iustitia*, to preside for one month; at a still later date two Consuls presided for a term of two months, and finally, after the nature of the primitive government has been changed, we find a single Consul acting as president throughout a whole year.[1]

[1] In a sentence given on December 30, 1172, we find seven Consuls named, a judge in ordinary, and three proveditors. The Consuls instal the judge, "huic missioni in possessum auctoritatem prestans." This document and many similar ones are in the Florence Archives, Curia di S. Michele. Some have been printed separately by Prof. Santini, in

They might be, but were not necessarily, legal experts, since they only pronounced and confirmed the judgment decided upon without either preparing or formulating it. This duty fell to a real *iudex ordinarius pro Comune*, together with three proveditors or *provisores*, who examined the case and wrote the sentence. The Consuls merely sat as presidents of the tribunal, and when, as sometimes occurred, they failed to appear, the tribunal acted on its own account. Therefore their office was practically the same as that of Countess Matilda herself—*i.e.*, to represent sovereignty without filling the place of judges.[1]

The real nature of the new government will be best understood after investigating the different elements of

pt. ii. of a volume soon, we hope, to be given to the world. We call the reader's attention to the fact that we quote from his work not only with regard to documents which are still inedited, but also touching those already edited by other writers, because we know that he has carefully collated all with their originals. In his forthcoming work he will probably indicate which documents were discovered by himself, which simply reproduced. *Vide* Santini, pt. ii. doc. i. In October, 1181, three Consuls preside "super facto iustitiae, nominatim in mense octobris." The judge *Restauransdampnum* confirms the sentence (ibid., doc. ii.). There are other documents to the same effect, though we also sometimes find two Consuls for one month. On January 27, 1197, there are two Consuls of justice for January and February (Santini, pt. ii. doc. ix.), and so on for some time, two Consuls for two months. On February 28, 1198, the two Consuls are judges by profession; but, nevertheless, the assistance of a judge in ordinary—one *Spinello Spada*—is still required (ibid., doc. x.). This is an additional proof that the Consuls of justice did not exactly fulfil the function of real judges. From 1201 downwards we find one Consul of justice *per totum annum* (ibid., docs. xiii., xv.).

[1] On April 18, 1201—there being then a *Potestà*—we only find "Gerardus ordinarium iudex cognitor controversiae . . . hanc sententiam tuli ideoque subscripsi," without a Consul of justice, who reappears soon afterwards (Santini, pt. ii. doc. xi). It would seem that at Pisa it was the rule to nominate special judges, *electi*, or *dati a Consulibus et universo populo*, who pronounced judgment on their own account, sometimes in the presence of the Consuls. Elsewhere we find *Consules de placitis*, or *Assessores Consulum* (as at Parma, for instance), who pronounced judgment without the intervention of the Consuls of the Commune (Ficker, iii. pars. 584 and 585).

the civic body from which that government was necessarily evolved. As we are aware, there were two leading classes and interests dividing the city between them—that is, the trade guilds, and the associations of worthies, or of the Towers. In numerical strength the people had greatly the advantage; but the worthies (*grandi*) were far more cultivated, trained to arms and politics, and already somewhat versed in the art of government. Therefore, the Consuls were recruited from this class, and at first always chosen from so small a number of families, that the office appeared to be almost an hereditary one. The misfortune of Florence, as indeed of all the other communes, Venice excepted, was that the *grandi* were never agreed among themselves. Feudal nobility in Italy resembled an exotic plant transferred to uncongenial soil. Elsewhere, being of German origin, it formed part of an entire political system; it was under the orders of the emperor to whom it adhered; it had certain heroic qualities; it created a special form of civilisation, and a literature that flourished in France and Germany, but it never throve in Italy, and in Tuscany least of all. Our feudal lords, being solely dominated by personal interests, leant on the Empire, the better to combat the Pope; on the Pope, to combat the Empire; on the one or the other indiscriminately to combat the cities. Even on Florentine territory the same thing continually occurred. The *grandi* established within the city walls were, it is true, of a very different temper, and much nearer to the people, whose life they shared; but they comprised very discordant elements; for whereas some of these *grandi* had risen from the people, others were descended from feudal houses, with whom they maintained friendly relations and on whose aid they could rely. Thirst for power was a speedy cause of division among them, and the ease with which one party gained favour with the working classes,

while the other was backed by the nobles of the *contado*, fostered the growth of civil strife. Then, later on, as more nobles deserted their castles for the city, a regularly aristocratic and Ghibelline party was formed in opposition to the Guelph and popular side. This point, however, was still far removed, for the common necessity of making head against the baronage of the *contado* long prevailed over all other interests, since the very life of the Commune was involved in that struggle.

All that we have so far related serves to show with increasing clearness that two quite distinct classes of citizens already existed in Florence—namely, that of the people or trades (*arti*), and that of the worthies (*grandi*). Had the new government been evolved from the trades alone, it would have assumed a form constituted on the basis of a trade guild. Had it issued from the *grandi* alone, it would have given rise to a regional and local constitution, corresponding with the sestieri of the city over which their abodes were scattered. In all Italian communes this double tendency is to be found. In Rome the constitution by districts, or *rioni*, prevailed; while at Florence, after a time, the constitution by guilds obtained in consequence of the enormous prosperity of commerce and industry in that city. Meanwhile, however, the moral predominance of the *grandi* and the pressing exigencies of war favoured a division of the city in *sestieri*, whereby the first assembling and organising of the army was greatly facilitated. It was for this reason that the Consuls were elected by their respective *sestieri*.[1] That the *grandi* were already organised in "Societies of the Towers"

[1] Originally, Florence was divided in quarters (*quartieri*). The old city did not then comprise the part beyond the Arno, Oltrarno, which was only inhabited by a few "low folk of small account" (Villani, iv. 14). Afterwards, but from the earliest days of the Commune, the city was arranged in *sestieri*, of which the Oltrarno formed one. In the year 1343 (Villani, xii. 18) the division in four quarters was resumed.

there is written evidence to prove. A document of 1165 alludes to these societies as having been in existence for some time,[1] and the parchments of the Florence Archives comprise actual fragments of their statutes dated only a few years later on.[2] The "Tower" was possessed in common by the partners or associates, and no share in it could be bequeathed to any one outside the society, or to any member elected by less than all votes save one. Women were naturally excluded. The expense of maintaining and fortifying the Tower, which always communicated with the houses of neighbouring members, and served for their common defence, was divided among them all. Three or more rectors, also sometimes called Consuls, managed the society, settled disputes, and named their own successors. These rectors and their companions are the men we now find at the head of the government; and there is clear documentary evidence that the Consuls of the Commune were almost invariably chosen from families belonging to the Societies of the Towers. When, too, we observe that some of them were occasionally nominated Consuls of the guilds,[3] as Cavalcanti, for

[1] It is dated January, 1165, and is to be found in the Florentine Archives (S. Appendix ii. doc. i. p. 517). It is an act of donation, giving part of a house to the members of the *Società della Torre* of Capo di Ponte: "Tam qui modo sunt, aut in antea fuerunt ex Societate vestre turris de Capite Pontis."

[2] On two scraps of parchment dated 1179 and 1180, together with a document, part of which dates from May 16, 1209, and part from an older period, in the Florence Archives. The Statute of the Podestà (in 1324) also mentions the Societies of the Towers. The whole question has been minutely studied by Prof. Santini in his learned work on the "Società delle Torri in Firenze," first published in the "Arch. Stor. It.," Series iv. t. xx. 1887, and subsequently in a separate form. In Appendix ii. of his previously quoted work the author includes several documents relating to these societies. They are respectively dated 1165, 1179, 1180, 1181, 1183, 1201, 1209, &c.

[3] In the above quoted, separate, work, at p. 55, and fol. Prof. Santini names many of these families, and supports his statements by documentary evidence.

example, and several others, we gain an undoubted proof of the friendly terms preserved, as we have previously noted, between these nobles and the people. The societies were organised somewhat after the fashion of the guilds, by which they may have been originally inspired, and were not on a strictly feudal basis.[1]

Had the more aristocratic Uberti achieved sole predominance in the city, things would have assuredly taken a different turn; but these patricians were compelled, although reluctantly, to yield to the force of events frequently opposed to their views. In fact, they were seldom Consuls before the year 1177, when, after exciting a genuine revolution, they were more frequently named to that post. This confirms the fact of their previous defeat in 1115. The consular government had then fallen into the hands of several noble families on good terms with the people. And it was the popular voice that prevailed in the assemblies where all the chief questions and interests of the State were decided.

The Consuls[2] were elected at the beginning of the year, two for each *sestieri*. At least, this seems to have been the ordinary number, although we cannot be quite certain,

[1] On this point I differ from Santini. The rural societies he has been able to discover are few in number, of a different nature from the others, and of less ancient date. Out in the country the principal basis of the society was lacking—*i.e.*, the tower surrounded by houses belonging to different members.

[2] Villani (v. 32) also tells us that Florence was under "the rule of Consuls chosen from the greatest and best of the city, with a council of the senate, that is of one hundred worthies, and that, as in Rome, all these Consuls "guided and governed the city, holding office for one year." He arbitrarily fixes their number at four or six, according to the division of the city in quarters or sixths, and adds that, whenever mentioned, only the chief Consul was named. January seems to have been the time fixed for the election. In 1202 we find the same Consuls in the first and second half of the year (March 1 and October 1). This would likewise prove that the year was not then begun on the 25th of March, according to Florentine style (Santini, doc. v.). In Sienna, January was the time of the election, and on the evidence of the chroniclers one may infer that it was the same in Florence.

since the number was not invariably the same. Two of the twelve, chosen in rotation, acted as heads of the college, and were styled *Consules priores*. For this reason the chroniclers only mentioned two Consuls as a rule, and sometimes one alone. In documents two, three, or even more are mentioned, but always as representing the rest of their colleagues, whose names are often added. Most rarely and only at exceptional moments do we find record of a higher number than twelve.[1] Then perhaps because the retiring Consuls continued in office with the new ones for a few days, or from some other passing cause that is unknown to us. Such variations are not surprising if it is kept in mind that the constitution of Florence, being then in course of formation, must have been liable to uncertainty and change, as will often be seen further on.

[1] The first document recording the names of consuls is dated March 19, 1138 (quoted by Hartwig, ii. 185, from the "Memorie di Lucca," vol. iv. p. 173, doc. 122), and states that "*Broccardus et Selvorus*" promise "*pro se et pro sociis suis.*" The second is dated June 4, 1138 (Santini, pt. i. doc. ii.), and in this a Count Ugicio (or Egicio) receives "launechild et meritum a Burello et Florenzito Consulibus, vice totius populi." These two documents of the same year do not contain identical names, perhaps because they only give those of the *Consules priores*, who sat in turn, as we have before remarked. Even in Sienna the *Consules priores* seem to have been continually changed. *Vide* Caleffo Vecchio for June, August, October, 1202; Caleffo dell' Assunta, 1202. And when Consuls were replaced by Governors, each of these was *Prior* for one week.

In two Florentine documents, among the Capitoli, dated April 7, 1174, and April 4, 1176 (Santini, pt. i. docs. vi. and ix.), all the Consuls—ten in number—are named, possibly the Consuls of justice being omitted. But, on the other hand, in an oath sworn by the men of Mangona to Florence (October 28, 1184, in Santini, pt. i. doc. xv.) we read: "Annualiter dabimus unam albergariam xij. Consulibus Florentie." Even in 1204 we find twelve; but more than twelve are recorded in the documents of the League (1197–8), and likewise in the year 1203. We have already given the probable explanation of this fact. The *Consules priores*, also existing in other communes, are seldom mentioned in Florence by the name of *Priores*, especially in early days. But there is one doc. dated October 24, and November 7, 1204 (S. pt. i. doc. liii.) saying: "Potestas Florentie vel Consules eiusdem civitatis, omnes vel maior pars vel Priores aut Prior eorum." So, too, another document dated October 15, 1200.

IX.

Attention should now be called to the popular element in the constitution. That the guilds were solidly established by the early part of the twelfth century is indubitably proved. Villani says that towards the year 1150 the Consuls of the Merchants, or rather of the "Calimala Guild," were entrusted by the Commune of Florence with the building works of San Giovanni" (i. 60). Of still greater significance is the fact that on February 3, 1182, the men of Empoli, in making submission to Florence, were bound to make a yearly payment of fifty pounds of "good money" (*buoni denari*) to the Consuls or Rectors of the city, and, failing these officials, to the Consuls of the Merchants,[1] as representing the Commune. Now, if these Consuls had reached so high a degree of importance in 1182, we are entitled to believe that the guild was of no recent origin. And remembering that the guild in question was the Calimala—*i.e.*, that of finishers and dyers of woollen cloths manufactured abroad, and more especially in Flanders, imported by Florence, and thence despatched to foreign markets—we shall understand that Florentine commerce must have already attained a prodigious development, and consequently that many of the guilds must have been already long established. A solitary instance would naturally afford little proof, since it might be open to various interpretations; but others can be adduced to the same effect. In a treaty between Lucca and Florence of July 21, 1184, we find a stipulation according to which the terms might be modified by the Florentine Consuls *comuni populo electi*, and by twenty-five counsellors, provided, as was expressly declared, the Consuls of the merchants were comprised in the number.[2] Likewise,

[1] Santini, pt. i. doc. xii.

[2] Ibid., pt. i. doc xv.

when the men of Trebbio made submission on July 14, 1193, the power of incorporating the agreement in the City Statutes was exclusively reserved to the seven *Rectores qui sunt super Capitibus Artium.*[1]

But a final observation occurs to us at this point, again showing the very uncertain and changeable nature of this consular government. In mentioning the chief authorities of the Commune, almost all documents refer to them as "*Consules seu rectores vel rector*," with the addition, at a later date, of "*Potestas sive dominator.*"[2] All these terms had a very general meaning at the period. Nevertheless, there must have been some reason for employing the formula—Consuls or Rectors or *Potestà*—in treaties of peace, or alliance, or state documents of high importance; and probably a special reason, seeing that we often find the formula ending as follows: "*Consules qui pro tempore erint, et si non erint*," the Rectors or the *Potestà* or the Consuls of the guilds were to act in their stead. Why so much vagueness in indicating the chief magistrate of the Republic? Only one explanation is possible. The real practical government of the city was carried on by the various associations; the office of Consul had few attributes and never attained the power and importance due to a central government, as conceived in the modern sense. The same remark may be also applied to the Priors, the

[1] There were, in fact, Consuls of the Commune, of the guilds, of the Arno, of the city gates, of the Societies of the Towers, and the latter were more specially styled Rectors. Yet even "Rectors" was a generic term, indicating all who governed, and there were Rectors of the Towers, of the city, and of the guilds. *Potestas* then indicated the supreme authority in general, and was only converted later on into a special and separate office.

[2] There are so many examples of this, that quotation is unneeded. It was the usual formula in other cities as well as in Florence. In the treaty drawn up between Lucca and Florence (July 24, 1184), from which we have already quoted, there was a proviso in case there might be no Consuls at Lucca, no *Lucana Potestas*, and this addition was accordingly made "aut bonos viros lucensis civitatis, si Consules vel Rector aut Potestas tunc ibi non fuerit."

Ancients, and other officers of later date; but it is specially true as applied to the consuls, under whom the various civic societies were first united in a single government. Therefore, to meet the eventuality of no Consuls being in office at the moment, it was provided that the Rectors of the Towers or of the guilds should naturally assume the power directly emanating from them. But as no public acts performed in the name of the Rectors are extant, we may conclude that the contingency arranged for seldom arose.

Frequent mention occurs of *counsellors* (*consilarii*), and we note that representatives of the guilds were comprised among them. We know, in fact, that there was a council in Florence, as in other Italian communes, and Villani tells us (iv. 7, and v. 32) that this council was called a senate "according to the custom given by the Romans to the Florentines," and composed of one hundred worthies (*Buoni Uomini*). In documents, however, they are nearly always entitled *consiliarii*, the term "senator"[1] only occurring once; but in those days the term *senato* or *consiglio*, *senatori* or *consiglieri*, were often indiscriminately applied, particularly with regard to the limited or *Special* Council, as it was afterwards called. No documents supply us with the precise number of the councillors; but we believe the one hundred recorded by Villani must be somewhat under the exact figure, since a form of oath sworn by 133 councillors is extant.[2] Perhaps each *sestiere*

[1] "Forte Belicocci Senator eiusdem [Florentiae] Civitatis" (in a document dated April 15, 1204, Santini pt. i. doc. li). Another document of November 13 and 14, 1197, in the Acts of the Tuscan League, we find the name *Bilicozus* among the *consiliarii* present. In the "Breve Consulum Pisane Civitatis," of 1162, edited by Bonaini, the councillors are styled *senatores*.

[2] This document (Santini, pt. i. doc. xxii.) is that of November 13 and 14, 1197, and also one of those of the Tuscan League. It should be remarked, however, that even at this grave juncture there were more than twelve Consuls; so, too, for similar reasons, either the number of the

elected about twenty or twenty-five members, without this being the invariable rule, and thus the Council might be approximately designated as that of the "Hundred." Then, too, there was the parliament, also known as the *Arengo*,[1] which was a general assembly of the people, held on great occasions for the gravest affairs of the State.

X.

Thus the Florentine Commune resembled a confederation of Trade Guilds and Societies of the Towers. Its directing authorities for affairs of war, finance, justice, and other matters of the highest importance, were the Consuls, elected yearly, with a senate or council of about a hundred worthies, likewise elected yearly, and lastly a parliament. The Consuls were almost invariably chosen from members of the Companies of the Towers, and if, for any reason, no election of Consuls took place, the rectors of the Towers or of the guilds were provisionally empowered to act in their stead. But the guilds predominated in the Council, and as a natural consequence the government assumed a popular character from that time, and the whole policy of Florence always tended to promote the trade and commerce of the city.

Nevertheless, to obtain a still clearer idea of a government of this kind, it would be requisite to ascertain exactly who and what were the citizens entitled to a share in it, and this point is still somewhat doubtful. The outlying territory (*contado*) was entirely excluded

councillors was augmented, or else (being towards the end of the year) some of the newly elected members sat together with those about to retire.

[1] The term *arengo*, *arrengo*, *aringo*, or *arringo*, was derived from the verb *arringare*, to harangue, in the same way as parliament from the verb *parlare*, to speak.

from citizenship, nor was this privilege granted to all dwellers within the walls, the lower class of artisans and the populace being excluded from it.[1] Hence the government was concentrated in the hands of a few powerful families, the heads of the guilds, and their principal adherents. In fact, even down to the last days of the Republic real citizenship—the possessors of which alone were eligible to political posts—was a privilege conceded to few, and even in 1494 the number of citizens scarcely exceeded three thousand. For this reason, even at the present day, we may find a few humble families asserting their inheritance of old Florentine civic rights, as a rare privilege and almost as a title of nobility. At Venice, even in the eighteenth century, to the last days of the Republic there still existed different grades of citizenship, and the right of government was restricted to a small caste. This is one of the points in our history demanding closer investigation. It is true that the whole people met indistinctly in parliament; but such assemblies were mostly of a purely formal kind. For, seeing that the parliament was convoked either in some square, often of small extent, or inside a church, we are bound to infer that the privilege accorded to all the inhabitants of the city was nominal rather than real.

It were likewise superfluous to add that the exact division of power, as in modern constitutions, was entirely ignored in those days. Affairs were divided according to their importance and the quality of the individuals concerned in them, rather than according to their nature.

[1] In Italian communes *habitatores*, and even *assidui habitatores*, are clearly distinguished both from *cives* and foreigners. Florentine documents often mention *cives salvatichi*, a term that indicates, I believe, the quasi citizenship of persons living in the country, but bound to dwell in the city during part of the year. These greatly increased in number later on, and in course of time became real and entire citizens, in accordance with certain rules not yet fully known to us.

The Council of the Hundred was not, as might be supposed, at this day, a legislative assembly, nor was the executive power vested in the Consuls. The latter gave judgment, administered affairs, commanded armies, executed the will of the people, and occasionally completed legislative acts even without the aid of the Council. This, however, was always consulted regarding very important reforms, but often voted for or against them without any discussion. On questions of extraordinary moment the parliament gave its *placet* without always understanding the nature of the question. On the other hand, not only affairs of some gravity, and particularly those for which money was needed, were referred to the Council; but this could also be consulted, at the Consul's pleasure, on any question whatever, from the proposed execution of some political offender to granting some citizen permission to transfer his abode from one *sestiere* to another.[1] Although a question of the latter kind seems very insignificant to us nowadays, it was an important one then, since it altered the distribution of the inhabitants in different parts of the city, and consequently the relative strength of these parts and the proportional right of the citizens to fill public offices—a point that was very jealously watched.

Such was the first form of government adopted by the Florentine Commune. But the Commune was not yet consolidated nor sufficiently sure of its strength. The territory beneath its sway was very limited in extent, with ill-defined, disputable and disputed frontiers. Even within these borders the Commune had very little power, inasmuch as the castled nobility not only vaunted their independence of the city, refusing to acknowledge any authority save that of the Empire, to which they were not always submissive, but waged constant war on the

[1] Many examples of this have been found by us among *provvisioni* (or decrees) of later date.

Commune, and perpetually incited neighbouring lands to rebellion. Accordingly, the first thing to be done at this juncture was to seize the *contado* by force of arms, reduce it to subjection and govern it, the which, as we shall see, led to many new and serious complications, both within and without the walls. These vicissitudes constitute the real civil history of Florence, which finally starts from this moment.

BELFRY OF S. ANDREA, MERCATO VECCHIO, FLORENCE.

CHAPTER III.

THE FIRST WARS AND FIRST REFORMS OF THE FLORENTINE COMMUNE.[1]

I.

AFTER Countess Matilda's death the envoys despatched from Germany to reassume the margraviate of Tuscany in the name of the Empire followed one another in rapid succession.[2] But almost all were men of small ability, pursuing a vacillating policy that led to no results. They tried to exercise the power of margraves, but were merely temporary officials of the emperor. Without resources, without knowledge of the country, they relied now on this party, now on that, incapable of distinguishing friends from foes, and never understanding the causes of the wars continually breaking out on every side. This state of things, well adapted to promote communal independence, lasted to 1162, when

[1] *Nuova Antologia.* Rome, July 1, 1890.

[2] Ficker, vol. ii. par. 310, p. 223. Here the names of many of these envoys are given, and what scanty details are known concerning them. To Rabodo (died 1119) succeeded a Corrado (1120–27), afterwards a Rampret (1131), then an Englebert (1134), then Errico of Bavaria (1137), immediately followed by Ulrico d'Attems, then the Duke Guelfo (1160–62), uncle to the Emperor Frederic I., by whom he was sent.

Frederic Barbarossa began to make the weight of his hand felt by initiating a clearer and more determined policy, although even his talent failed to obtain any notable results.

The Florentines were those best able to profit by the weakness of the Empire. In 1129 they took possession of the Castle of Vignalo in the Val d'Elsa ;[1] and in 1135 destroyed the stronghold of Monteboni, belonging to the Buondelmonti, whose name was derived from it, and who were now forced to submit to the Commune, yield it military service, and dwell in the city a certain part of the year.[2] On this head Villani remarks that the Commune now began to extend its borders "by violence rather than by reason, . . . subjecting every noble of the *contado*, and demolishing fortresses." This was, in fact, the policy of Florence, and it led to two inevitable results. An increase of territory was the first ; the second, that the always-increasing number of nobles brought into the city paved the way for the formation of an aristocratic party opposed to the people, and consequently promoting civil strife and future changes of government.

In June, 1135, the Imperial envoy Engelbert entered Florence, and seemed amicable to the Commune.[3] He speedily moved on to Lucca, where he met with a serious defeat. The succeeding envoy, Errico of Bavaria, came with a considerable force, and appeared ill-disposed towards the Florentines. His stay, however, was short, and his successor, Ulrico d'Attems, showed friendly intentions, and in 1141 even aided the Florentines in a skirmishing expedition against Sienna.[4] But all these envoys came and

[1] "Annales," i.
[2] "Annales," i. ; Sanzanome, Florentine ed., p. 128 ; Villani, iv. 36.
[3] "Annales, i. : 16 kal. Iulii. Ingelbertus Florentiam est ingressus."
[4] "Annales," i. ; Otho of Friesland, *vide* Pertz, xx. 264, and the Annali Senesi.

disappeared like meteors. Florence was now beginning its great war with Count Guido, surnamed the Old, who had become their foe. A contested inheritance served as a pretext for the rupture; but the real cause must have lain in the increased power and menacing attitude of the count. His possessions hemmed in the Republic on all sides, and Sanzanome said of him, "Per se quasi civitas est et provincia."[1] The citizens first seized a castle of his near Ponte a Sieve, and then attacked his stronghold of Monte di Croce. But, aided by neighbouring towns, the count succeeded in defeating the Florentines on June 24, 1146. Nevertheless, they contrived even then to extort advantageous terms, namely: that part of the walls should be dismantled, and that the castle should hoist the banner of Florence.[2] All this was done, and there was truce for a time, while the count seems to have been engaged on distant expeditions. But later, the walls were restored, and thereupon the Florentines,[3] declaring that the agreement had been violated, suddenly stormed the castle in 1153, and rased it to the ground. And thus, wrote Sanzanome, "*Mons Crucis est cruciatus.*" Certainly all this could not lead to

[1] Sanzanome, Florentine ed., p. 129.

[2] This is related by an eye witness in the Passerini collection of documents (often quoted to us) at p. 389. The "Annales," i., manifestly err in assigning precisely this date of 1147 to the capture of Monte Orlando, which really happened in 1107. The erasures in the Codex just where the date and places of the event narrated are written—*i.e.*, before the entry in Florence of Henry IV., 1111—also serve to prove that a blunder had been made.

[3] The above-quoted Passerini Documents make repeated mention of the reconstruction of the walls, both at p. 394 and p. 217. It records at the same point the subsequent destruction of Monte di Croce: "Et dixit quod sunt lx. annos quod fuit destructus Mons Crucis." Both Villani (iv. 37) and the pseudo Brunetto Latini give the date of 1154; the "Annales," ii., the Neapolitan Codex, and Paolino Pieri, that of 1153. Sanzanome, according to his frequent practice, gives no precise date even here (at p. 130). He merely says that the first attack on the castle took place in 1146.

peace. Count Guido ceded part of Poggibonsi to the Siennese on condition of their fortifying and defending it against the Florentines, who were preparing to make an assault. By accepting the gift Sienna stood pledged to play an active part in the war, which thus continued to spread.[1]

II.

Just at this time, however, the state of affairs changed, for Tuscany was beginning to feel the influence of Frederic I. (Barbarossa). This emperor, finding that Duke Guelfo was unable to make himself respected, despatched (1162–3) the Archbishop Reinhold of Cologne, a man of energy and brains, with the title of "Italiae archicancellarius et imperatoriae maiestatis legatus," and charged to reorganise the Imperial administration on a new plan. Frederic regarded the dissolution of the margraviate as an accomplished fact, and wished to assume the direct government of its various component parts by means of German counts or Podestà, in the manner already adopted by him in Lombardy. Reinhold set to the task with zeal, establishing German governors and garrisons in the principal castles of the *contado;* and where no castles remained new ones were erected.[2] San Miniato, with its tower on the hill, dominating the suburb of San Genesio below, was the headquarters of this new administration. Here Reinhold established Eberhard von

[1] Santini, i. doc. iii. dated April 4, 1156.

[2] "Constituit etiam Teutonicos principes ac dominatores super Lombardos et Tuscos, ut de caetero eius voluntati nullus Ytalicus resistendi locum habere ullatenus posset. Vita Alexandri," in the year 1164. In the "Cronica Urspergense," of the year 1186, we read that: "Cœpit Imperator in partibus Tusciae et terrae romanae castra ad se spectantia, suae potestati vendicare, et quaedam nova construere, in quorum presidiis Teutonicos praecipue collocavit." *Vide* Ficker, vol. ii. par. 311, p. 227.

Amern with the title of "*Comes et Federici imperatoris legatus.*"[1] Frederic's scheme of policy was clear and precise; but in order to carry it into effect against the will of communes that were already emancipated, and against the interests of many native counts, would have required much time and a great army, both of which were lacking at the moment. Reinhold was soon called elsewhere for other undertakings, and although his successor, the Archbishop Christian of Mayence, was likewise a man of ability, their efforts led to few practical results. Their only success consisted in the amount of money squeezed from the people; for, as a chronicler puts it, "like good fishermen, they drew everything cleverly into their nets." But they established no firm political basis.

It is true that the new German Podestà, or *Teutonici*, as they were called, were seen springing up on all sides. We now find, in fact, continual mention of the *Potestas Florentiae and Florentinorum*, and of the same dignitaries in Sienna, Arezzo, and many other towns. Nevertheless, they exercised little or no power in great cities: these being still governed by Consuls, who disputed the authority of the *Teutonici* of the *contado* outside the walls. This state of things could not be of long continuance. By special permission from the emperor, the Consuls of certain well-affected cities were allowed to exercise jurisdiction, in his name, not only within the walls, but even sometimes over part of the *contado;* always, however, with a reservation in favour of nobles, and often of churches and convents, who were to remain subject to the Imperial authority alone.[2] Everywhere else in Central Italy the Imperial Podestà were to take the entire command, for the

[1] "Nullus enim Marchio et nullus nuntius Imperii fuit, qui tam honorifice civitates Italiae tributaret, et romano subiceret Imperio." *Vide* the Annali Pisani, in Pertz's Mon^ta. Ger^ma. xx. 249. Ficker, vol. i. par. 137, p. 259.

[2] Ficker, vol. i. par. 122–4.

emperor admitted no doubt as to the complete and absolute nature of his rights. But the question now hinged on facts rather than on rights, and was only to be solved by a greater force than that possessed by the Empire in Tuscany. Hence, an enormous confusion ensued. All the great cities, and more especially Florence, continued to rule themselves as before; while in the rural territories (*contadi*), Imperial Podestà, Tuscan counts, feudal lords, Consuls great and small, or other officers of the Commune, daily contested one another's authority, and the masses no longer knew whom to obey. Even the cities and nobles siding with the Empire not only failed to carry out Frederic's designs, but actually opposed them; for, in point of fact, this Teutonic over-lordship, wielded by grasping and tyrannous Imperial officials, was equally odious to all.

A sufficiently accurate idea of this state of things may be gleaned from the accounts of contemporary witnesses, who were summoned at various times to furnish authentic details as to the condition of the country. Those sent to report upon the monastery of Rosano describe it as being subject to Count Guido, who was continually driven to defend it "against the warden of Montegrossoli, other Teutons, and the Florentine Consuls," all of whom tried to exercise authority there. They also describe how at Monte di Croce, the Consuls of that place and the *vice comites* all held command simultaneously, and were compelled to defend themselves from the *Teutonici*, and against the encroachments of the Consuls and other officers of the Florentine Commune.[1]

On another occasion an equally chaotic state of things is described in the reports on the castle and valley of Paterno, of which Florentines and Siennese disputed the dominion. One witness tells us that in his day he saw

[1] *Vide* the Passerini Documents, pp. 208, 394–400.

a certain Pipino, *Potestas Florentiae*, holding sway there, and over all the rest of the Florentine *contado*. Another records how he visited the Paterno valley and the whole of the *contado*, together with the consuls of the Commune and a *Teutonico*. Several declare to have gone there now with Pipino, now with other *Teutonici*, and at other times with the Consuls, and that all received obedience and levied taxes in the same way. Then we have the curious deposition of one Giovanni *de Citinaia*, who gives a long account of recent events in the district. He tells us how a big pillar was uprooted by a priest, who, not knowing for what purpose it had been planted, wanted to use it for the church he was building. But it was so heavy that even with a cart and two oxen he failed to remove it. And some peasants who were looking on, cried out to him : " Domini sacerdos, male fecisti, quia est terminus inter Florentinos et Senenses" (" Master priest, thou hast done ill, for this is the boundary stone between Florence and Sienna"). After this, the witness continues, two persons went to the warden of Montegrossoli, and said that if he would help them to rebuild the Castle of Paterno, they would furnish him with proofs of his right over it. The warden cheerfully hastened to Florence to get the permission of the authorities, but quickly returned, saying that the building could not go on, for the Florentines refused consent, because the Archbishop Christian of Mayence was already in Lombardy on the way to Tuscany. Thereupon the Siennese made use of the favourable opportunity to demolish the neglected works, and play the masters themselves. It is certainly impossible to conceive a greater multiplicity and confusion of contrasting rights and authorities.[1]

[1] Some of these depositions have been printed before, but the whole collection is now given in Santini, i. doc. xlv. They are dated May, 1203, but naturally refer to a much earlier period. *Vide* Santini, pp. 115, 117–19.

Hence the only course open to Florence and the Tuscan communes in general was to seize every convenient occasion of asserting their rights either by craft or by violence. The war between Pisa and Lucca had already broken out, and as Count Guido, the foe of the Florentines, had joined with Lucca, they formed an alliance with Pisa. This treaty was very advantageous to their commerce, but it pledged them to an active share in the war.[1] They willingly undertook this, for it was an opportunity of fighting not only the Lucchese, but also the latter's patrons, Count Guido and Christian of Mayence. At first it seemed as though Pisa would be forced to make peace, for on March 23, 1173, Christian declared that city to be under ban of the Empire, thus stripping it of all the privileges it had previously enjoyed. In fact, on the 23rd of May an agreement was concluded (witnessed also by the Florentines) to the effect that Pisa and Lucca should proceed to an exchange of prisoners. The ban was raised on the 28th of the same month, and peace was solemnly proclaimed in Pisa on the 1st of June.

But two months afterwards an unexpected event caused the war to be speedily renewed. The archbishop had invited the Consuls of Pisa and Florence to come to San Genesio on the 4th of August, and on their arrival had them promptly seized and cast into prison. What could have caused an act rendering war unavoidable, after such strenuous efforts to establish peace? Many explanations have been suggested, but one fact alone is well ascertained. Certain men of San Miniato, having been expelled as rebels to the Empire, had sought the Bishop of Florence[2] in his palace, and sworn not only to make

[1] *Vide* the treaty given in Santini, i. doc. iv.

[2] Count Macharius was the Imperial representative at San Miniato. Ficker gives a list of other German counts in that castle (vol. ii. par. 311, p. 227 and fol.).

common cause with the Pisans and Florentines, but to cede them the territory of San Miniato, should they succeed in retaking it, and even if the fortress remained in the hands of the Germans.[1] This is certainly true, for the document containing the agreement is still extant. It is no regular treaty, being unwitnessed by Consuls, and lacking the proper legal formulas. But the fact of its having been sworn to and signed in the bishop's palace; of some leading citizens, including one of the Uberti,[2] having been parties to it; and of the document being preserved in the Archives,[3] proves that the rulers of the two cities were not unaware of the agreement, but merely preferred to hide, or rather disguise the real importance of it. All this, joined to their reluctance and delay as to the exchange of prisoners, persuaded Christian that they were trying to trick and betray him by a fictitious peace. Accordingly, his patience being exhausted, he was led to commit an imprudent and ill-considered action, that destroyed all hope of the peace he was so anxious to conclude.

In fact, by August the Florentines were already at Castel Fiorentino, and, reinforced by a contingent of 225 horse, accompanied by two Consuls from Pisa, encamped at Pontedera. Christian quickly marched against them, together with Guido and the Lucchese, but the latter were obliged to forsake him, for the Pisans, by advice of the Florentines, had entered the Lucca territory and were laying it waste. Notwithstanding his diminished force he attacked the enemy, and valiantly defended his

[1] "Castrum autem intelligimus recuperatum etiam sine superiori incastellatura."

[2] At this moment many former partisans of the Empire were fighting against it. Pisa is one example.

[3] Nevertheless it was not kept among the *Capitoli* comprising real official documents, but among papers of an almost private nature. Hartwig was the first to bring it to light (ii. 61); and it was afterwards reprinted verbatim in Santini, pt. iii. doc. i.

banner, but was worsted in the fight. How the war went on is unknown to us; but it is certain that Christian soon took his departure, that in 1174 the rebels of San Miniato returned with honour to their native town, and that finally in the following year peace was concluded between the three hostile cities.[1]

Meanwhile the Florentines continued to subject the towns and castles of the territory to their rule.[2] Before this, in 1170, they had wrung hard conditions from the Aretines,[3] who were friendly to Count Guido, and they now marched against Asciano, a walled town near Arezzo, partly under their rule and partly under that of the Siennese, who were now trying to get full possession of it. The latter were routed on July 7, 1174, and leaving a thousand prisoners in the enemy's hands were accordingly obliged to submit to very disadvantageous terms.[4] The negotiations were carried on slowly, but peace was concluded at last in 1176.

The Florentines were acknowledged as the legitimate masters of the whole *contado* of Fiesole and Florence, and obtained part of the Siennese possessions at Poggibonsi, the said Siennese being bound to help them in all wars,[5] save

[1] Tommasi, "Storia di Lucca," in the "Arch. Stor. It.," vol. x. *aa annum;* Roncioni, "Istorie Pisane," in the "Arch. Stor. It.," vol. vi. *ad annum;* Marangoni, i. 285; Ottoboni, "Annales," i. 95; Hartwig, ii. 58–63.

[2] *Vide* Santini, i. docs. v., vi., vii., viii. The first of these is dated Feb. 23, 1173; the others are of April 7, 1174.

[3] "Annales," ii., year 1170; Villani, v. 5.

[4] "Annales," ii.; Sanzanome; Villani, v. 6; Neapolitan Codex (here, however, the event is ascribed to the year 1175); Repetti, art. "Asciano"; Hartwig, ii. 64–5.

[5] This treaty (in which not only the emperor, but also Christian of Mayence, and Count Macharius, who was then at San Miniato, are expressly named) is in the Siennese Archives, Caleffo Vecchio, at c. 9, and Caleffo dell' Assunta, at c. 53. Dr. Hartwig published a large summary of it, made by Wüstenfeld. Thanks to the kindness of Cavaliere Lisini, Director of the Sienna Archives, we were enabled to obtain a copy of the treaty, and of other documents connected with the peace. Some belonging to Florence are comprised in Santini's work, i. docs. ix., x., xi. (April 4 and 8, and December 11, 1176).

against the emperor or his envoys, and likewise pledged to use every endeavour to conciliate the latter in favour of Florence. Several more of the conditions were particularly harsh.[1] That the Florentines could extort such terms as these after the petty war of Asciano is an undeniable proof of their increased power; but it is equally certain that unless the Siennese were hopelessly ruined, this was only a fictitious peace, concluded after great hesitation, and for the sole purpose of securing the release of the prisoners.

III.

Nevertheless, these triumphs abroad were counteracted by unforeseen events in Florence itself. Owing to the prevalence of the popular party in the consular government, powerful houses in general, and the Uberti faction in particular, were increasingly excluded from public affairs, and naturally showed signs of discontent. At this moment we seldom find any of their names at the head of the Commune.[2] Meanwhile, however, many neighbouring castles and lands having been reduced to submission, the number of nobles of the *contado* dwelling in the city had been greatly augmented. These, being merely counted as *assidui habitatores* or *cives salvatichi*, could have no share in the government, but there was nothing to prevent them from joining the disaffected party and swelling its numbers and strength. And when, in course of time, they became full citizens, their power of action was enlarged.

[1] "Et quod Comunis Senensis acquisierit extra corum episcopatus et comitatus, dabo medietatem Florentinis." In the above-quoted treaty among the Siennese Archives.

[2] Nevertheless, in the year 1174, we find a Guido Uberti on the list of Consuls. Santini, i. doc. vi.

Accordingly, at last, in 1177, the Uberti were encouraged to hazard the revolution that first initiated civil war in Florence.

All the chroniclers speak of this war, and it must have been of considerable importance, seeing that it was pursued for nearly two years with much bloodshed and the destruction by fire of the greater part of the city. Likewise, the river Arno overflowed and broke down the Ponte Vecchio. Villani describes the two fires of 1177, saying that the first extended from the bridge to the Old Market; the second, from San Martino del Vescovo to Santa Maria Ughi and the Cathedral. He also relates the fall of the bridge, adding, as usual, that all this was a righteous chastisement from Heaven on the proud, ungrateful, sinful city. He speaks of the revolution that occurred at the same time as though it had nothing to do with the burning of the town. He goes on to say that the Uberti, who were the "principal and most powerful citizens of Florence, with their followers, both noble and plebeian, began to make war against the Consuls, lords and rulers of the Commune, at a fixed moment and on a fixed plan, from hatred of the Signory, which was not to their liking. And the war was so fierce, that in many parts neighbours fought against neighbours from fortified towers, the which were 100 to 120 *braccia* in height (150 to 180 feet). Likewise certain new towers were erected by the street companies with monies obtained from neighbours, and these were called the Towers of the Companies.

For two years the fighting went on in this fashion, and with much slaughter; and the citizens became so inured to perpetual strife, that they would fight one day and eat and drink together the next, recounting one to another their various deeds and prowess. At last, tired out, they made peace, and the Consuls remained in power; but

these things created and gave birth to the accursed factions which soon broke out in Florence." [1]

On the other hand, the pseudo Brunetto Latini dates the first fire extending from the bridge to the Old Market, on August 4, 1177. But he quickly adds that in the same year began the "discord and war, for the space of twenty-seven months, between the Consuls and the Uberti, who refused to obey either the Consuls or the Signory, yet nevertheless formed no government of their own. This strife among the citizens caused great mortality, robbery, and arson. The city was set on fire at five different points; the Sesto d'Oltrarno, and the part between the Churches of San Martino, del Vescovo, and Sta. Maria, were burnt down." [2] According to the same chronicler, the fall of the bridge took place on November 4, 1178, and the civil war only came to an end in 1180, with the triumph of the Uberti, one of whom, Uberto degli Uberti, actually became Consul. "The which afterwards led to the creation of Podestà, who were nobles, powerful, and of foreign birth." [3]

[1] Villani, v. 8. The "Annales," ii., of 1177, say that "Orta est guerra inter Consules et filios Uberti; eodem anno combustu est civitas florentina." The Neapolitan Codex dates the first fire the 4th of August, as Villani also does, and gives the commencement of the civil war immediately afterwards, the which "filled two years." Paolino Pieri dates the first fire August 4, 1174, and the fall of the bridge and the second fire in 1178. Tolomeo da Lucca merely states that a revolution broke out in 1177 and lasted for two years.

[2] Chronicle of the pseudo Brunetto Latini, *ad annum*.

[3] We subjoin an extract from the pseudo Brunetto Latini, as it stands in the Gaddi Codex, with all its blunders. After giving an account of the revolution, the chronicler goes on to say: "Then in the year 1180 the Uberti gained the victory, and Messer Uberto degli Uberti and Messer Lamberto Lamberti were consul and rector of the city of Florence, together with their companions, and these formed the first consulate of the city, the which was brought about by violence, only afterwards they began to rule the city according to reason and justice, every one preserving his own position, so that it was decided by the citizen Consuls to summon powerful nobles of foreign birth to fill the post of Podestà, as will be shown to you in writing farther on." It is strange that the

In spite of a few seeming contradictions on the part of both chroniclers, their evidence, joined to that of others, clearly proves that in 1177 a revolution led by the Uberti took place and lasted about two years, accompanied by rapine, murder, and arson. The Uberti did not gain a complete victory, since the consular government survived; but they and their friends were in power more frequently than before, and for this reason the pseudo Brunetto Latini considers them to have conquered. All this gave the government a more patrician tendency. It heralded the change that replaced the Consuls by a Podestà, and cast the first seed of the factions and civil wars destined to involve the city in long-continued strife and bloodshed. Such, in fact, is the gist of the chronicles, and all later documents and events serve to confirm it. Nevertheless, peace was re-established within the walls for the nonce, and the policy of Florence remained unaltered. The partial triumph of the aristocracy had at least one good effect; inasmuch as the nobles, being satisfied for the moment, lent efficacious assistance to the Commune, and enabled all its affairs to be pushed forward more briskly.

In fact, on February 3, 1182, the people of Empoli were reduced to submission, bound over to pay annual tribute and to yield military service at the request of the Florentine Consuls, save in the event of a war against the Counts Guidi, who still owned some feudal rights over Empoli.[1] The people of Pogna, which was a fief of the

chronicler should ascribe the origin of the Consuls to so late a date. But, seeing that his list of these magistrates only begins at this point, it would seem that he really believed them to have no earlier origin. Nevertheless, shortly before, in writing of 1177, he had stated that the Uberti began to make war on the Consuls; hence it is clear that even in his opinion they had existed before the year 1180. Still, blunders and incongruities of this sort are frequently found even in Villani and other chroniclers of the same period.

[1] Santini, i. doc. xii. This is the document stating that the tribute of fifty pounds of "good money" was to be paid to the Consuls of the city, or, failing these, to the Consuls of the merchants, authorised to receive it for the Commune.

Alberti,[1] were the next to make surrender on the 4th of March. And these Pognesi not only pledged themselves to take the field at the command of the Florentine Consuls, but to abstain from constructing new walls or fortresses, either on their own territory or the neighbouring lands of Semifonte. Also, should others attempt to fortify those places, they (the Pognesi) were bound to oppose it and give notice of the fact to the Florentines, who, on their side, promised friendship and protection.[2] In the same year the Castle of Montegrossoli was captured by the Florentines.[3] On July 21, 1184, they made an alliance with the people of Lucca, who promised to send them yearly a contingent of one hundred and fifty horse and five hundred foot, for at least twenty days' service, in all wars waged within Florentine territory.[4] In October the Florentines attacked the Castle of Mangona in the Mugello, but as this fortress belonged to the Alberti, the latter stirred Pogna to rebellion, and the Florentines quickly marched against

[1] This had been granted them in an Imperial patent, given at Pavia *iv. Idus Augusti*, 1164, the which has been published several times, and is also included in the "Storia della guerra di Semifonte," by Messer Pace da Certaldo (p. 5). As all know, this is a counterfeit "Storia" dating from the beginning of the seventeenth century.

[2] Santini, i. doc. xiii. This is the document with the erroneous date, 1101, rectified by Marquis Capponi to 1181 (modern style, 1182).

[3] Villani, Paolino Pieri, the Neapolitan Codex, and the pseudo Brunetto Latini. The "Annales," ii., wrongly assign the event to 1172.

[4] Santini, i. doc. xiv. The terms were not to be altered without the consent of the Consuls of either city, together with that of at least twenty-five councillors on either side; and the Consuls of the soldiery and of the merchants were to be included in the number. We note that in naming the Consuls a hint is already given of the possible election of a Podestà, although none had as yet been chosen in Florence. This subject will be resumed later on. Meanwhile, the words of the document run as follows: "Inquisitis florentinis Consulibus, vel florentina Potestate, sive Rectori vel Dominatore a comuni populo electo." On Lucca's side mention is also made of the "bonos viros lucensis civitatis, si Consules vel Rector aut Potestas ibi non fuerint."

that town.[1] Count Alberti seems to have taken part in the fight that ensued at Pogna, for it is known that by November he was in captivity and forced to accept very hard terms for himself, his wife and his children. He had to promise to dismantle his fortress of Pogna the following April, only retaining his own palace and tower; to demolish the tower of Certaldo, and never rebuild that of Semifonte. He was to cede to the Florentines whichever one of the Capraia towers they chose to take; he was to give them one-half of the ransom or tax to be levied on all his possessions in general between the Arno and the Elsa. Finally, as soon as he should be released from prison (*"postquam exiero de prescione"*), he was pledged to compel all his men to swear fealty, and to the payment of four hundred pounds of good Pisan money. His sons were to reside in Florence two months of the year in time of war, one month in time of peace.[2] The subjection and humiliation of this Count Alberto was a very significant fact in itself. And when we reflect that it occurred after Florence had already overthrown the Cadolingi, lowered the power of the Guidi house, and concluded most favourable alliances with Pisa, Sienna, and Lucca, it will be easily seen how quickly the Commune had been able to soar to a position of very great and almost menacing strength.

IV.

All this certainly contributed no little to hasten the coming of the Emperor Frederic I., and, in fact, we find

[1] The "Annales," ii., the pseudo Brunetto Latini, and the Neap. Cod. date the event in 1185; Villani (v. ii.) dates it instead 1184, and says that Pogna was occupied by nobles, who were *cattani* and hostile to Florence. We follow Villani, for otherwise it would be impossible to explain the captivity of Count Alberto in 1184, an event confirmed by documentary evidence.

[2] Santini, i. doc. xvi. and xvii.; the first dated November, 1184, and the second, November 29, 1184.

him in Tuscany for the deliberate purpose of reducing the country to subjection in the year 1185. But he came without an army, reliant on the might of the Empire, on his own shrewdness, and his own reputation. He believed in the possibility of achieving his plans by alienating some of the Tuscan cities from Florence, and compelling them to side with the Empire against her. Above all, he counted upon Pistoia, situated between Lucca and Florence, and hostile to both ; upon Pisa, whom he hoped, by means of large concessions, to win back to the Imperial cause, to which she had so often adhered before. He became still more hopeful of success when, on reaching San Miniato, in the summer of 1185, many nobles of the *contado* came to do him homage, with loud complaints of the oppressive rule of the free cities. On the 25th of July he emancipated many of these nobles, and some of their fiefs, from the jurisdiction of Lucca.[1] On the 31st of the same month he entered Florence, still surrounded by nobles of the *contado*, who, as Villani says, complained bitterly of the city, "which had seized their castles, and thus grossly insulted the Empire."[2] Hereupon, the chroniclers affirm that Frederic deprived Florence of the right of jurisdiction over her own territory, even just outside the city walls ; and even assert that he adopted the same measure with regard to all the Tuscan towns, excepting Pisa and Pistoia.[3] But this point has been seriously disputed, many refusing to admit the possibility of a fact unsupported by any documentary proof. On the other hand, some writers consider it to be proved by a later event, the which is not only related by several chroniclers, but also confirmed by existing documents.

[1] Hartwig, ii. 79. [2] Villani, v. 12.

[3] The "Annales," ii., and Paolino Pieri except Pisa alone ; Villani, the Neap. Cod., and the pseudo Brunetto Latini except both Pisa and Pistoia.

In fact, by a patent dated June 24, 1187, Henry VI., in reward, as he expressed it, for services rendered by the Florentines to his father and himself, granted them judicial rights over the city and the *contado* beyond, to the distance of one mile in the direction of Fiesole, of three towards Settimo and Campi, and of ten in all other directions.[1] Even within these narrow limits, however, the nobles and soldiery were to be independent of the city. In token of gratitude for this liberality on the part of the emperor, the Florentines were bound to present him every year with a piece of good samite, *bonum examitum*.[2] Similar and equally limited concessions were granted to other cities also.[3] Accordingly, some have said, since Henry restored right of jurisdiction to the Florentines, it is clear that his father had deprived them of it. In fact, we know that throughout Tuscany Frederic established Imperial Podestà, who bore the names of their respective cities.[4]

[1] The chroniclers only say, with obvious inexactitude, for ten miles round.

[2] This diploma is given in Ficker, iv. doc. 170, p. 213. Henry (then Henry VI., King of the Romans, afterwards, as emperor, also called Henry V.), after granting the concession, adds: "Excepto ac salvo iure nobilium et militum, a quibus etiam volumus ut Florentini nihil exigant." The diploma only refers in general terms to the services rendered by the Florentines to Henry and to his father, Frederic I. Villani considers the grant a reward for their prowess in the Crusade; but the Crusade took place in 1189, and the grant was made in 1187; for although he wrongly dates the latter in 1188, this blunder does not suffice to remove the anachronism. Besides, he also states that the concession was granted through the intervention of Pope Gregory VIII., who was elected in 1187, and died the same year.

[3] In 1186 Perugia was granted judicial rights over the *contado* beyond the walls: "Exceptis domibus et possessionibus, quas habent marchiones et monasterium S. Salvatoris," and, excepting several nobles, specified by name, "in quibus nihil iuris Perusinis relinquitur." Ficker, i. par. 128, p. 242. Sienna, after being deprived of the *contado* in June, 1186, received it back in October, under the same conditions, and so, too, Lucca in the same year. Ficker, i. par. 125, p. 239, and par. 128, p. 242.

[4] Ficker often gives the names of these Imperial Podestà, as gleaned from the depositions of witnesses. *Vide* Ficker, vol. iii. p. 440. Hartwig (ii. 192) cites one *Henricus comes florentinus*, also mentioned by Stumpf,

Also, reasoning in this style, those writers went so far as to suppose Florence to have been deprived of judicial powers even within the city walls. But, as we have seen, Henry's patent does not speak of restitution—only of the liberality shown in rewarding the services of the Florentines, although it is impossible to understand what those services could have been.[1] On the other hand, it is hard to believe that Florence, who had dared, in weaker times, to use violent measures against the Imperial envoys, murdering Rabodo and putting Christian of Mayence to flight, should now, when so much stronger, and the chief power in Tuscany, unresistingly submit to deprivation of judicial rights throughout her own territory, and even within the city walls. In addition to all this, there seems no doubt that there were Consuls of Florence during the same period, and therefore the theory of there being Imperial Podestà in the city itself naturally falls to the ground. In fact, the Consuls' names are recorded in documents of 1184. It is true that, for the three following years, the pseudo Brunetto Latini is the only authority by whom they are mentioned; but it is difficult to suppose that he invented them all, or that he could have been mistaken three consecutive times. Although during these three years no documents give the names of the Consuls, they afford, indirectly, continual hints of their existence.[2]

and who seems to have been a Podestà of the *contado* in September, 1186. After all this, it is not surprising that the Imperial authority should be often referred to in documents of the latter half of the twelfth century. We may cite some instances from the rolls of the Florence Archives: October 14, 1175 (Passignano), "Sub obligo Consulum Florentinorum vel Nuntio Regis"; October 9, 1185 (Passignano), "Sub duplice pena Imperatoris et eius Missi aut quicumque habuerint dominium pro tempore." (Reference is here made to the *contado*, and is another proof of the uncertain rule previously described by us.)

[1] "Liberalitate benefica ipsos respicere volentes, concedimus," &c. . . . "huius munifice nostre concessionis."

[2] In 1184, *vide* in addition to the chroniclers, Santini, i. docs. xiv., xv., xvii., and Hartwig, ii. 191. For the years 1185, 1186, and 1187, besides the names recorded by the pseudo Brunetto Latini, the documents furnish

Hence it is necessary, in my opinion, to begin by recognising that, according to the ideas and the policy of Frederic I., there was no question as to his right of exercising jurisdiction over Tuscany; and that if the cities had virtually exercised this right without a special grant to that effect, they had violated thereby the rights of the emperor, who was accordingly justified in resuming them. For this end, he had commissioned Reinhold and Christian to establish Podestà everywhere,[1] and to restore affairs to what he deemed their sole legal and normal condition. Only the difficulty here was not in proving his right, according to the Imperial theory, but in being able to enforce it. It was a question of fact, only to be resolved by force. As we have seen, Imperial Podestà were established on all sides; and while even in the *contado* they could only obtain partial and somewhat contested obedience, in the greater cities, and particularly in Florence, they obtained none at all. The *Potestates Florentiae*, or *Florentinorum*, as of Sienna or the Siennese, whose names so often occur, are almost invariably—and in the case of Florence, one may say quite invariably—Imperial Podestà, established in the *contado*, and disputing its jurisdiction

frequent allusions of the following kind: April 30, 1185 (Passignano), "Sub obligo Consulum Florentie resarcire promitto"; December 13, 1185 (Santa Felicità), "Sub obligo Consulum Florentie"; April 26, 1186 (Passignano), "Penam ad Consules Florentie"; September 21, 1187 (Arch. Capitolare, 629), "Consulum vel Rectorum pro tempore Florentie existentium (Actum Florentie)." The rolls of the Arch. Capitolare were examined by Santini, to whom we are indebted for the information; those of the Florence Archives we have personally examined, but some of these were first brought under our notice by Santini.

In 1189 there were undoubtedly Consuls. Not only are the names of three of them recorded by the pseudo Brunetto Latini, but documents give the names of the Consuls of justice. Santini, ii. docs. v. and vi.

[1] Ficker (ii. par. 313, p. 234) cites the words of Pillius, a jurist of the period: "Ut quando faciunt castellanos vel comites in Tuscia"; and, further on: "Sicut fit hodie illis, qui pracficiuntur in singulis provinciis, vel in parte alicuius provinciae, ut in comitatu senensi, florentino vel aretino."

with the Consuls. Now, seeing that the commune considered the *contado* to be its own territory, and therefore craved the sole command of it, while from the Imperial point of view city and *contado* were equally subject to the Podestà of the Empire, it naturally followed that these dignitaries were commonly styled Podestà of Florence or of the Florentines; and in the same way, Podestà of Sienna or of the Siennese, of Arezzo or the Aretini, &c. But, as a matter of fact, they not only failed to command obedience within the gates of great cities, but even in the *contado* outside were continually in conflict with the consular authority. We have already seen what a chaos was the result. Nevertheless, it seems natural to believe that the arrival of Frederic I. in Tuscany must have strengthened immensely the power of these Podestà, and that, at least for a time, they must have been enabled to enforce their judicial rights throughout the country, and to the very gates of the town. This made the chroniclers assert that the emperor had stripped Florence of its *contado*. It is certain, however, that on his departure things rapidly lapsed into their previous condition. That is to say, the consuls did their utmost to neutralise the action and authority of the Imperial officials. The rise of the communes had created a new state of things which the Empire was powerless to destroy, even while refusing to acknowledge its legal value. Therefore Henry was finally driven to accord a partial valuation, in the guise of a generous concession, to an actuality that by this means he might at least hope to keep within definite limits.

And in reality his patent of 1187 granted Florence much less than she had possessed for some time before. If, in fact, the territory of the Commune was not to extend more than one mile in the direction of Fiesole, this latter city remained outside the border, although already subjected to Florence by force of arms, together

with the whole of its *contado*, which, indeed, as proved by every treaty, had been incorporated in the Florentine territory since 1125. Also, as though this were not enough, Henry declared all nobles within the circumscribed area left to the city, to be exempted from its jurisdiction, even including those who had legally and officially made submission to it. Notwithstanding all this, Florence found it best to accept the Imperial grant. Thus things remained practically as before—that is to say, the Commune could continue to hold the virtual command, and snatch as much more as should be possible. The chronicler Paolino Pieri, in recording this concession, states that the Florentines regained the *contado*—"that is, they took it back," and by this phrase he unconsciously defines the real condition of things. Meanwhile, the Empire yielded the point legally by recognising the judicial rights of the Consuls within the city and over part of the *contado* outside. As to the rest, it was left to be decided, as in the past, by force of arms. All this serves, in our opinion, to make things clear, and likewise to explain the inexactitude and confusion of the chroniclers, who, unable to distinguish between the practical and legal side of the question, continually jumbled both together. Undoubtedly it was hard to disentangle them, seeing that the fact was confronted by two, or rather three, separate rights, each refusing to acknowledge the others—namely, the right of the Empire, that of the Commune, and, lastly, that of the Pope, whose voice was always heard repeating—although always in vain—that the Church was Matilda's sole heir.

V.

Nevertheless, the presence in the *contado* of German Podestà or counts exercised some influence, even if

indirectly, on the city itself. Or rather, their presence contributed to modify its constitution by promoting in a certain way the creation of a new civic magistracy, bearing their own title. In fact, the Latin term of *potestas*, *potestà*, or *podestà* was given to every chief authority during the Middle Ages; even in 1068 it was the title attributed to Duke Goffredo of Tuscany. Later, it was bestowed on the German counts governing the *contado* in the name of Frederic I. From them it was afterwards transferred to municipal magistrates. It seems to have been given first to officials despatched by the Commune to the *contado*, when this was already occupied by German counts, in order to imitate and oppose them. At least, there is reason to believe that certain officials with Italian names, and bearing the title of Podestà of Florence—or of Florentine Podestà—before any such post had been created in the city, must have been of this class. Two of these officials, Renuccio da Stagia and Guerrieri, are known to us and mentioned more than once in the Rosano reports.[1] It seems probable enough that Renuccio may have been appointed before the year 1180[2]—that is, when there were assuredly Consuls in Florence.[3] Hence it is to be concluded that he held office in the *contado*. But whether or no this theory be admissible, it should be noted that all Florentine documents of the time, when mentioning the Consuls, always add the words: "sive Rector vel Potestas, vel Dominator." At first it is merely a generic formula, vaguely suggesting the possibility of another magistrature. But little by little the formula

[1] They are both named in the Passerini documents, from which we have frequently quoted.

[2] According to the results of Hartwig's inquiries, between 1150 and 1180.

[3] We find in the Passerini documents (p. 206) that one of the witnesses states that Count Guidi "defendit ipsum monasterium [of Rosano] a Teutonicis et a Renuccio de Stagia, quando erat Potestas Florentinorum, et a Consulibus Florentinis."

assumes a more concrete character; the term *Potestas* becoming of so much more importance, as to often precede that of *Consules*.[1] Then, the new office is on the point of birth; and finally, in 1193, makes its appearance in the person of Gherardo Caponsacchi, a Florentine belonging to a consular family.

Ammirato was mistaken in thinking that there had been a magistrate of this kind in the year 1184, because he found that the treaty of alliance between Florence and Lucca mentioned no individual in particular, but made a general allusion to the office of Podestà.[2] As we have observed, however, too many similar allusions occur in State papers, even when Florence was certainly ruled by Consuls, to allow us to draw the same conclusion. It may be that Florence had a Podestà even earlier than 1193, but until we find some document specifying the name of a person filling that office, we cannot venture to assert it as a fact.

At any rate, the institution of the new magistracy was preceded by an increased influx of nobles within the city walls. This, indeed, was one of the chief causes of the change. Continual proofs to this effect are afforded by contemporary documents, and confirmed by the narratives of the chroniclers. The pseudo Brunetto Latini tells us that in 1192 the Consuls included "Messer Tegrino of

[1] October 14, 1175 (Passignano), "Sub potestate consulum Florentinorum vel Nuntio Regis"; July 5, 1191 (Arch. Capitolare, 347), "Sub pena Consulum Florentie vel Potestatis"; April 15, 1192 (Arch. Capitolare, 449), "Sub obligo Potestatis vel Rectorum pro tempore Florentie existentibus"; November 7, 1192 (Passignano, in the Church of St. Biagio), "Sub obligo Potestatis in hac terra existentis" (here allusion is possibly made to some Podestà of the *contado*); May 9, 1193 (Passerini documents in the Florence Archives), "Sub obligo Potestatis vel Consulum Florentinorum . . . Actum Florentie." According to these and other rolls examined by me in the Florence Archives, the change is seen to have been carried out in a regular and steady manner. The ancient formulas reappear from time to time.

[2] "Inquisitis florentinis Consulibus, vel florentina Potestate, sive Rectore vel Dominatore . . . florentini Consules vel florentina Potestate sive Rector vel Dominator" (Santini, i. doc. xiv).

the Counts Guidi, 'paladin' in Florence, and Chianni de' Fifanti." Now, to find a count and count palatine or paladine among the Florentine Consuls is an absolutely new thing. The same writer also says that in the same year "a decree was issued in Florence that the Counts Guidi and the Counts Alberti and the Counts da Certaldo, Ubaldini et Figiovanni, Pazzi and Ubertini, the Counts of Panago, and many other nobles, being citizens, were to dwell in the city of Florence during four months of the year." However much or little value this chronicler may have, his statement agrees with the information found in documents, and explains the origin of the new magistrature. Assuredly the nobles cannot have relished being subject to the popular consular government, against which they had struggled since the year 1177, and must have particularly disliked being under the jurisdiction of persons they deemed their inferiors in rank and dignity. Besides, as the elements composing the mass of the citizens became more heterogeneous, thus increasing the danger of civil war, so much the more the possibility of being judged by their political adversaries must have seemed unbearable to them. Hence the need was felt of a new magistrature of a different and, preferably, of an aristocratic character, and an Imperial institution, such as that of the Podestà, was chosen for a model. The holder of this office is no mere judge, as many believed and recorded; he is the positive head and representative of the Commune; he signs treaties, commands the army, and fills the place of the Consuls.

In fact, when on July 14, 1193, the Castle of Trebbio made submission to Florence, the Commune was officially represented by Gherardo Caponsacchi *Potestas Florentie et eius consiliarii*, together with the seven rectors of the headships (*Capitudini*) of the guilds.[1] The councillors,

[1] Santini, i. doc. xx.

whose names are inserted in the document, are likewise seven, and almost all of consular houses; two, indeed, are nobles—namely, a Count Arrigo (perhaps of Capraia) and a Tegghiaio Bundelmonti. It seems certain that Consuls were again chosen in 1194, since the pseudo Brunetto Latini names two, one of whom was an Uberti. In 1195 a Podestà reappears in the person of *Rainerius de Gaetano, cum suis consiliariis*, among whom a *Consul iustitiae* is included.[1] It may be considered a certainty that these councillors, whose number is continually varying in the documents, were no other than the Consuls, who survived in this transitory form for some time, with the Podestà as their chief. Together with him they represent the Commune, sometimes even without him. But by degrees their importance diminishes, while that of the Podestà is increased. In short, there is a period of transformation during which the new, and as yet, ill-defined form of government alternates with that of the Consuls.

In 1200 the Podestà is no longer a Florentine, but a foreigner, and already represents the government, unaided by councillors, who have disappeared altogether in 1207—namely, when the government has assumed its definite shape. Or, to express it more accurately, their function was continually changed and their number increased, until they were converted into a special council of the whole city, beside the ancient council or senate that was changed into a general council. On arriving at that time we shall find the government represented by the Podestà and two councils, sitting either separately or jointly, and styled in the latter case the general and special council. Thus the consular office may be considered to have been altogether extinguished. In fact, excepting one final attempt in 1211 and 1212, when

[1] Santini, ii. doc. viii. His name is *Corsus*, and at one point he is styled a councillor *super facto iustitie*, at another, *consul iustitie*

Consuls were once more elected, we never meet with them again. What we have related will make it easier to understand why the chroniclers attribute the origin of the Podestà to various dates. The pseudo Brunetto Latini makes the office begin in 1200—namely, the year when it was first held by a foreigner, and alien birth considered an indispensable qualification for the post. Therefore, before that time, the chronicler seems to regard the Podestà chiefly as a head Consul.[1] We can also understand why Villani, on the contrary, should have dated the origin of the office from 1207. This, in fact, was the year in which it assumed a really definite shape, since the Podestà was not only a foreigner, but appears unescorted by councillors. Nevertheless, Villani makes a mistake in representing him as a magistrate chosen for the sole purpose of administering justice more impartially, and in adding that "the signory of the Consuls did not cease then, inasmuch as they continued to hold power over all other affairs of the Commune." He makes two blunders here, but the second is little more than a simple anachronism. In fact, although his statement cannot be true as regards 1207, it may have been at least partially true with reference to the preceding years, when the Consuls still survived their own decease, as it were, in the guise of councillors to the Podestà.

VI.

It is certain that there was a recurrence of consular

[1] In the years 1193 and 1195 he still mentions the Consuls, and even by name. These may have been the *consiliarii* of the two Podestà known to have existed in those years. It is well to observe here that all this would have been impossible in the case of Imperial Podestà, had there ever been any in Florence. They could never have appeared in the light of chief Consuls.

government between 1196 and 1199.[1] But just at that time an event of considerable importance worked a radical change in the general policy of Tuscany, and is accordingly worthy of notice. The Emperor Frederic I. died on September 27, 1197, and his death led first to the abandonment and then to the total ruin of the Imperial system he had so persistently striven to establish throughout central Italy. The people of San Miniato destroyed the fortress held by the Germans, and subsequently the walls of St. Genesio.[2] The Florentines bought back the Castle of Montegrossoli, which had been re-occupied and fortified by nobles, who proved very troublesome.[3] After this Florence set a greater undertaking on foot, by forming a league of the Tuscan cities against the Empire. It was finally arranged at St. Genesio on November 11, 1197, when first the Lucchese, and then the Florentines, Siennese, the people of San Miniato, and the Bishop of Volterra made oath to maintain it, and the solemnity of the occasion was enhanced by the presence of two cardinals of the Church. The main terms of the treaty were, an alliance for the common defence against all opponents of the League, and a pledge that neither peace nor truce should be made "cum aliquo Imperatore

[1] Florence Archives, "Bullettone," c. 131. July 10, 1196: "Dominus Petrus episcopus habuit tenutam a consulibus curie Communis Florentie." In the years 1197–99, *vide* the documents of the Tuscan League, quoted later on, and Hartwig, ii. 194.

[2] In the year 1197, Paolino Pieri tells us: "San Miniato al Tedesco, or rather its fortress, was destroyed." In 1198, he tells how "San Genesio was pulled down by the inhabitants" (*terrazzani*), who then returned to the hill-top, and rebuilt San Miniato. Villani (v. 21) says that San Miniato was destroyed, and its inhabitants came down to St. Genesio in the plain. *Vide* also the "Annales," ii., and the Neap. Cod., *ad annum*. Hartwig (ii. 93) has examined the question minutely, and swept away all inaccuracies and exaggerations.

[3] "Annales," ii., Neap. Cod., *ad annum*, Villani (v. 22). From the reports of eye witnesses, published by Passerini, one sees that Montegrossoli was troublesome to its neighbours, and even Villani says that it was held by *cattani*, who made continual attacks on the Florentines.

vel Rege seu Principe, Duce vel Marchione," without the consent of the Rectors of the said League. It was also agreed to attack all cities, towns, counts, or bishops refusing to join the alliance when requested so to do.[1] What was the pressing danger? Why this alliance against the Empire at the moment when it was no longer a source of alarm? There is one stipulation that best explains the real object in view. It is to the effect that castles, towns, and small domains were only to be admitted to the League as dependents of the legitimate owners of the territory whereon these castles or domains might be situated; but a single exception was made in favour of Poggibonsi,[2] because its dominion was disputed by many claimants. Montepulciano was to be admitted as a dependence of Sienna whenever that city should be able to prove its right of dominion.

It seems clear from all this that the genuine purpose of the League was to take advantage of the emperor's decease in order to secure to the cities the complete possession of their respective territories. To this end it was necessary that Tuscany should be united, and consequently adherence to the League was to be, as far as possible, obligatory. Its subsequent documents leave no doubt as to the true aim in view; indeed, they furnish very ample proof that Florence had promoted the League, in order that all Tuscany might aid her to regain speedy possession of the *contado.* But, although the League was against the Empire, it was by no means intended for the defence of the Pope, since it utterly disregarded his pretensions to Matilda's inheritance. For refusing to recog-

[1] *Vide* the "Acts of the League" (November 11 and December 14, 1197; February 5 and 7, 1198), in Santini, i. doc. xxi., and in Ficker, vol. iv. p. 242, doc. 196. Ficker uses some of the documents preserved in Florence, and also some of those at Sienna which are more complete and correct at certain points.

[2] Sed Podiumbonizi possit recipi per capud.

nise any emperor, king, duke, or margrave, without the approval of the Roman Church, a proviso was added showing that should the Pope desire to join the League, he must accept its terms in order to win admittance. Should he request assistance to reconquer his own territories, everything was to be done according to the orders of the Rectors of the League. But should the territory he wished to reconquer be already in the hands of the communes, or of any of the allied cities, the League could afford him no help. It was impossible to speak more clearly. Accordingly, when Innocent III. became Pope, early in 1198, we soon find him manifesting much disapproval of the conduct of the League, in spite of being adverse to the Empire and favourable to the national Italian spirit.

At Castel Fiorentino, on December 4, 1197, the Rectors of the League were sworn in. First among them were the Bishop of Volterra and the Florentine Consul Acerbo, who was practically the head, although that title was accorded to the bishop by reason of his ecclesiastical rank. For the moment Pisa and Pistoia held back ; but these and other Tuscan cities had retained the right of adhering to the League.[1] Arezzo had already joined on the 2nd of December, Count Guido gave his oath on February 5, 1198, and Count Alberto on the seventh of the same month. Nevertheless, in signing the second of these two treaties, the Florentines expressly reserved their right to attach Semifonte, and procure the submission of the Alberti estates of Certaldo and Mangone, even by force if required.[2] Thus many other adhesions were

[1] *Vide* the "Acts of the League" in Ficker, vol. iv. p. 246.

[2] "Atti della Lega." The Florentines swore to the League on November 13 and 14, 1197. The document in Santini, i. doc. xxiii. gives the names of sixteen Consuls and 133 councillors who took the oath. In a preceding document, also relating to February 5 and 17, 1198, there are the names of ten Consuls, but three of them are not the same on both days, so that there must have been more than twelve Consuls in February, 1198. Some, too, were already in office even in November, 1197, and

obtained by means of stipulations virtually implying acts of submission to Florence.

This was the moment chosen by the newly elected Pope Innocent, soon after his consecration in the same month of February, to write to the two cardinals who had witnessed the oath to the League, stating that on many points he considered the said treaty "nec utilitatem contineat, nec sapiat honestatem," inasmuch as it neglected the fact of the Duchy of Tuscany appertaining to the Church, "ad ius et dominium Ecclesiae Romanae pertineat." He intended, therefore, to enforce his rights. If the members of the League submitted to him, he would compel the Pisans, under threat of interdict, to likewise join them against the Empire; otherwise he would leave them at liberty to do as they chose.[1] But as no attention was paid to him, he had to make a virtue of necessity and considerably lower his tone.[2] Some slight concessions, though of what nature is unknown, seem, however, to have been made to him, for afterwards, when writing to the Pisans, he appeared to be better satisfied, and urged them to join the League. It is, however, certain that they persisted in their refusal, and although the Pope, grown shrewder by experience, afterwards became a declared and energetic champion of the League against the Empire, this fact

this confirms our previous hypothesis that, on the great occasion of the League, all or part of the withdrawing Consuls remained in office with those just elected. Nor is this a solitary instance. On April 2, 1212, the Commune of Prato, in arranging a treaty with Florence, sent three *Consules veteri*, and three *Consules novi eiusdem terre* to conclude it. Santini, i. doc. lx.

[1] Innocentii III., "Epistolae," i. 15, 27, 34, 35; Ficker, vol. ii. par 363, p. 384.

[2] Instead of mentioning the *Ducatus Tusciae*, he now spoke of the *magna pars Tusciae, quae in nostris privilegiis continetur*. To the Pisans he wrote, "Post correctionem adhibitam, nihil invenimus quod in ecclesiastici iuris vel cuiusquam maioris vel minoris personae praeiudicium redundaret." And in February, 1199, he urged them to join the League. Innocentii, "Ep.," bk. i. 401 and 555; "Gesta Innocentii," c. ii.; Ficker, vol. ii. par. 363, pp. 385–6.

only availed to augment his moral and political influence, without winning him a single handsbreadth of territory, or enabling him to enforce any one of his pretended rights over Tuscany. The Florentines, on the contrary, profited more and more by this state of things. On April 10, 1198, Figline entered the League, not only made submission to Florence, but paid a yearly tribute also [1]; and on the 11th of May Certaldo agreed to identical terms.[2] The Republic persevered in the course it had marked out with equal shrewdness and energy. It allowed the nobles to take an increasing part in the government, so as to secure their hearty co-operation in achieving the aim it had in view. The same Count Arrigo da Capraia, who in 1193 was on the council of Podestà Caponsacchi, was actually promoted to the consulship in 1199.[3] Finally, in 1200, a foreigner was elected Podestà,[4] in the person of Paganello Porcari of Lucca, a measure that, as we have already noted, the nobles had long desired to carry out. And as Porcari

[1] Santini, i. docs. xxiii., xxiv., xxv. The first is dated the 10th; the second, April 15, 1198; and the third, giving the names of the men of Figline swearing fealty to the League, is also dated the 15th of April. The second alludes to the chief Consuls: "Comandamenta Consulum florentine civitatis omnium vel maioris partis aut priorum ex eis." The third informs us (pp. 43 and 44) that the oath was sworn: "In Florentia, in ecclesia S. Reparate et Parlamento, coram florentino populo iuraverunt." Also further on: "In ecclesia S. Reparate, in Aringo." This is another instance of the parliament being convened in a church.

[2] Santini, i. doc. xxvi. Obedience was sworn to the Consuls or Rectors *vel segnoratico aliquo extante*. This, too, is an expression having very little savour of the more democratic temper of former times.

[3] In Villani (v. 26) he is wrongly styled Count Arrigo della Tosa. The Della Tosa family were not counts. The pseudo Brunetto Latini speaks of him in an undated paragraph, anterior to his record of 1200, as "Messer Arrigo, count of Capraia."

[4] As we have stated, it seems to be for this reason that the pseudo Brunetto Latini dates the office of Podestà from this moment: "A novel thing was done, and for the first time a Potestade was elected in Florence. from jealousy of the Consuls, the which Potestade was Paganello Porcaro of Lucca."

showed energy and daring in the conduct of the war, he was again chosen the following year. Then, in February, 1201, Count Alberto made oath to cede the height of Semifonte, with its fortress and walls, to the Florentines; and to assist them, whenever required, to gain possession of Colle, Certaldo, and the town of Semifonte.[1] The Bishop of Volterra likewise made oath to assist them in these campaigns.[2] All this seemed to come about as an inherent consequence of the terms of the League, and before long the allies, finding themselves reduced to serve the interests of Florence alone, naturally began to show signs of weariness and suspicion. But, heedless of all else, the Commune made ready for the expedition against Semifonte, for which all these treaties had paved the way.

Florence had long contemplated the seizure of that stronghold, for, owing to its strategic advantages and the ease with which the position could be reinforced by friendly neighbours, it had been a thorn in her side. Accordingly the now haughty Republic determined to make an end of it. We have already related how in 1184 Count Alberto had been compelled to accept the

[1] Santini, i. doc. xxvii. (February 12 and 23, 1200); doc. xxviii. (February 12 and 19); doc. xxix. (February 12 and 23, and March 25). In these papers the Podestà is always mentioned with the councillors, and the office of the Consuls is also invariably recorded: "Sive parabola Potestatis et Consiliariorum vel Consulum sive Rectorum Florentie" (p. 49). "A Potestate vel Consiliariis eius, sive a Consulibus Florentie vel Rectoribus" (p. 48). In a posterior document (Santini, i. doc. xxxvii., dated August 14, 1201), we find the councillors representing the Podestà: "Sitio filio condam Butrighelli, Melio filio Catalani Consiliarii domini Potestatis Florentie, recipienti (*sic*) vice et nomine dicte Potestatis et totius Comunis Florentie" (p. 72). These councillors did not yet form a special council, but were on the way to it, since the council or senate of the city being already called the general council, the existence of a special one is implied: "In Florentia, in ecclesia S. Reparate, coram generali consilio civitatis, iuraverunt." Santini, i. doc. xxviii. p. 53.

[2] Santini, i. doc. xxx.

same terms exacted from the people of Pogna in 1182—namely, to give his solemn promise to build no defences. Nevertheless, profiting by the arrival of Frederic I. and the difficulties in which Florence was then involved, he had presently erected the Castle of Semifonte on the Petrognano rock, and Florence had never forgiven this offence. He had also assumed the title of *Comes de Summofonte*. Near the castle a town had sprung up, and, as many sought refuge there from neighbouring places conquered and taxed by Florence, its population had rapidly increased. Indeed there was already this rhyme afloat in the *contado*:

> "Firenze, fatti in là,
> Che Semifonte si fa città."[1]

It was for these reasons that the Republic so persistently tried to secure pledges of help from its neighbours by the numerous treaties to which reference has been made, and likewise by others concluded through the efforts of the energetic Podestà. But Sienna had still to be reckoned with, and Sienna might do good service to the hostile Alberto, who was already prepared for defence. Accordingly the Florentines signed an alliance with that state on March 29, 1201, promising their aid against Montalcino, which showed as threatening a front to Sienna as the Semifonte position towards their own city.[2] Also Colle was made to swear to accord no help to the people of Semifonte.[3] Thereupon the war finally began.

[1] It may be roughly rendered:

> "Florence, get out of the way,
> Semifonte's a city to-day."

[2] Santini, i. doc. xxxiv.

[3] This treaty was concluded April 27, 1201; about five hundred inhabitants of Colle swearing adhesion to it on the 28th, 29th, and 30th of April. Santini, i. docs. xxxv. and xxxvi.

The chronicler Sanzanome, who witnessed it, declares, with his habitual exaggeration, that it lasted five years, but he may have counted in all the preliminary skirmishes.[1] At any rate, it was a hard struggle, for, treaties notwithstanding, Semifonte received help from all its neighbours, whose jealous dread of Florence had considerably increased. Then, too, owing to the strength of its position and the ability of Scoto, its valiant Podestà, the castle opposed so vigorous a resistance to the beleaguring army surrounding it on all sides, that the Florentines, seeing no hope of winning it by force, called treason to their aid. A certain Gonella, with some other fugitives, escaped from an adjoining territory, had taken refuge in the castle, and been entrusted with the defence of the Bagnuolo tower. This man made use of his post to betray the place to the enemy. But at the moment that he and his comrades were in the act of opening the gate, the defenders of Semifonte fell on them with fury and killed them all. Nevertheless, the evil deed had done its work, for Semifonte was speedily forced to surrender. Even if this was not brought about by treason alone, as Villani asserts (v. 30), the betrayal of the tower undoubtedly contributed to that result. In fact, on February 20, 1202, the Consuls, then returned to office in Florence, granted a perpetual exemption from all dues or taxes to the descendants of Gonella and his companions fallen in the cause of the Republic.[2] The same year, on the 3rd of April, the terms of the castle's surrender were subscribed and sworn. The Florentines assured pardon, protection, and the return of all

[1] "Per quinquennium guerra durante et eidem omnibus de Tuscia prestantibus patrocinium. . . . Tacere tamen nolo magnalia quae inter caetera vidi, guerra durante." Sanzanome, Florentine ed., pp. 134–5.

[2] The document is given in the "Delizie," of Ildefonso di San Luigi, vii. 178. Perpetual exemption from all taxes was decreed to Gonella and his comrades, "qui mortui fuere in turre de Bagunolo et in muris apud Summumfontem, in servitio Communis Florentie." *Vide* also in Hartwig, ii. 100.

prisoners to the people of Semifonte, but the latter were bound to demolish their fortress and walls; were to desert the hill and settle in the plain; and all save the soldiery and the churches were to pay a yearly tax of twenty-six *denari* on every hearth.[1]

The Pope expostulated strongly with the Florentines for their cruelty towards Semifonte, but after sending him a letter of justification in reply, the Consuls continued to follow their own course, and picked a quarrel with the Siennese.[2] The point of dispute was the Castle of Tornano, in the Paterno valley. Florence wished to get possession of it, and the Siennese declared that it was not theirs to give, seeing that it was the property of independent lords. Thereupon the Florentines set to work in their usual way, by persuading Montepulciano, a large town belonging to Sienna, to swear submission to them, and also promise an annual tribute.[3] Accordingly, war would have broken out at once, but for the intervention of Ogerio, the Podestà of Poggibonsi. Being accepted as arbiter, he carefully studied the question of border lines, and conscientiously defined them. His verdict was given on June 4, 1203.[4] According to the boundaries traced by Ogerio, Florence retained the whole of the Fiesolan and Florentine *contado*, and the valley of Paterno was

[1] Santini, i. xxxviii., xxxix. The treaty of peace was concluded between Alberto da Montauto, lord of San Gemignano, for the people of Semifonte, and Claritus Pillii, Consul of the merchants for Florence.

[2] This letter, published by Winkelmann (Philipp von Schwaben, i. 556), is taken from a MS. of the Florentine Boncompagni, in the Archives of Berne, No. 322, fol. 18, and part of it is referred to by Hartwig, ii. 102.

[3] About eight hundred men of Montepulciano swore to these terms on the hand of the Florentine Consul. Santini, i. doc. xl. October 19, 24 1202.

[4] Santini, i. docs. xlii., xliii., xliv., and xlv. These papers, dated April and May, 1203, give the names of all the Siennese citizens and country people sanctioning the arbitration in the name of their city. The last document contains the depositions of the witnesses examined by Ogerio. Doc. xlvii., June 4, 1203, is the verdict pronounced by him.

comprised in these limits. The Siennese were to do their best to persuade the lords of the castle to cede that as well. Both sides agreed to this arrangement;[1] it was scrupulously respected by the Siennese, and on May 15, 1204, it was sanctioned by Pope Innocent III., at the express desire of the Florentines.[2] Nevertheless, the latter continued their secret practices with Montepulciano, and on the 30th and 31st of May induced that town to renew its oath of offensive and defensive alliance against Sienna.[3] As soon as this became known, there were fresh complaints, fresh protests from the Siennese. They brought the affair before the League, and the Rectors of the same were expressly assembled at San Quirico di Osenna, April 5, 1205, under the presidency of the Bishop of Volterra, the Florentines and Aretines having declined to appear. By the examination of witnesses, it was clearly proved that Montepulciano appertained to the Siennese.[4] We do not know whether the verdict was then pronounced, nor do we know the final result of the quarrel. But it seems clear that from this moment the League was virtually dissolved, and by the act of the Florentines, its original initiators. Their primary object was now achieved in the main, and henceforth they could expect nothing from their allies save impediments to the fulfilment of their ulterior designs. For, more or less, all distrusted their ambition, and were tired of playing the part of passive tools.

[1] On the days 4th, 7th, and 8th of June, the Bishop and Commune of Sienna gave up all that was due to Florence, in accordance with the verdict. Santini, i. doc. xlviii. On the 6th of the same month one hundred and fifty Siennese councillors swore observance to the terms. Santini, i. doc. xlix.

[2] Santini, i. doc. lii.

[3] Ibid., i. doc. xlvi.

[4] Murat., "Antiq. It.," iv. 576–83. *Vide* also Ficker (vol. ii. par. 312, p. 229 and fol.), who gleaned from this important document the list of the Podestà established as Imperial envoys in the Siennese territory. These Podestà are mentioned by the witnesses as "Comites teutonici, Comites comitatus senensis pro imperatore Federigo," and occasionally even as "Comites contadini."

But the Florentine Consuls allowed nothing to check their course of action, and quarrelled next with the Counts of Capraia owning a castle of the same name on the right bank of the Arno, near the Pistoian frontier. In conjunction with the Pistoiese, these nobles could easily bar the Arno against the Florentines. Accordingly, before this, in 1203, the latter had deemed it well to erect another castle on the opposite bank at a place called Malborghetto. The very significant name of Montelupo that they gave to the new building was sufficiently expressive of its purpose. In fact, men already repeated the saying, "To destroy this goat, there needs a wolf." [1] This affair also would have provoked strife had not the Florentines, with their accustomed diplomatic subtlety, profited by the friendly offices of the Lucchese to turn it to their own advantage, and avoid coming to blows. In fact, a treaty was arranged in June, 1204, by which Florence was bound to leave the right bank of the river unmolested, and the Counts of Capraia to respect the left bank of the same.[2] And before long the count decided to swear alliance and fealty to the Florentines, together with his dependents, all of whom, excepting the soldiery, became subject to a yearly hearth tax of twenty-six *denari*. He also ceded his castle and other possessions on the left side of the Arno, near Montelupo, being likewise pledged to the defence of this fort.[3]

[1] "Per distruggere quota capra, non ci vuol altro che un lupo." *Vide* Repetti, art. "Capraia e Montelupo"; Hartwig (ii. 106–9) rectifies some chronological and other blunders made by Villani.

[2] The treaty is probably extant in the Archives of Pistoia. Repetti, in citing it from the "Aneddoti" of Zaccaria, dates it the 3rd of June; other writers date it July.

[3] Dated October 29, November 17, 1204, in Santini, i. doc. liii. The oath sworn before the Consul Guido Uberto was of obedience to the commands "que . . . fecerint Potestas Florentie vel Consules Civitatis vel maior pars vel priores aut prior eorum." Thus the Podestà's name came first, even at a time when there were Consuls in office, before whom the oath was sworn, in presence of "Angiolerii Beati, Doratini et Burniti

According to the pseudo Brunetto,[1] and one of the old lists of Consuls, although with no documentary evidence of the fact, Count Rodolfo, son of Count Guido di Capraia, became Podestà of Florence in 1205. Now, if this be true, it must be concluded that his nomination had been also stipulated in the treaty.[2] In the ensuing year the consular government seems to have been resumed, but in 1207 we come at last to the genuine Podestà of foreign birth, in the shape of Gualfredotto Grasselli of Milan, who henceforth represented the Commune without requiring the assistance of his *consiliarii*. Grasselli, too, was re-elected the following year, to enable him to carry on the campaigns the Florentines had planned with so much ardour some time before. An occasion for renewing hostilities was not long delayed. The Montepulciano question had become angrier; and accordingly the Siennese, considering that territory to be theirs by right, resolved to attack it. In the certainty of being reinforced, Montepulciano made a most obstinate defence; and the Florentines, after waiting awhile, also recurred to arms in 1207. In co-operation with Lombard, Romagnol, and Aretine allies, they marched with their *Carroccio* to the assault of the Castle of Montalto della Berardenga, between the rivers

Paganiti sexcalcorum Comunis Florentie." Even the office of *sexcalcus* is new (it is also mentioned in another document of the 30–31st of May, in Santini, i. xlvi.), and seems to us a sign of the change tending to a more aristocratic form of government in Florence. The communal oath sworn on October 29, 1204 (Santini, i. doc. liv.) began thus, "Hec sunt sacramenta, quae Potestas et Consules Comunis et Consules militum, mercatorum et Priores Artium et generale Consilium, ad sonum campane coadunatum, fecerunt Guidoni Borgognoni comiti et filiis et Caprolensibus." The Consuls took the oath, not the Podestà, for there was none, although nominally heading the formula.

[1] Recorded in the "Acta Sanctorum," the 1st of May, at p. 14, and also in the list (known as that of Sta. Maria Novella) of the Consuls and Podestà. *Vide* Hartwig, ii. 197. But the documents of this year only refer in general to the Consuls and Podestà without giving any names.

[2] Sizio Butrigelli, or Butticelli, is mentioned in the Sta. Maria Novella Catalogue. Hartwig, ii. 197.

Ambra and Ombrone, and guarded on all sides by their Pistoian, Lucchese, and Orvietan friends. These were all routed on the 20th of June, leaving many prisoners in the enemy's hands. According to Paolino Pieri the number taken was 1,254. The castle was destroyed, but the war went on, notwithstanding the Pope's efforts to bring about a peace. The Florentines then made a furious attack on the Castle of Rigomagno, and when the scaling ladders broke down they climbed on one another's shoulders and thus won the walls. The capture of this stronghold made them masters of the Ombrone valley.[1] Thereupon (February, 1208) the Siennese were forced to accept peace on very hard terms. By the treaty concluded between the 13th and 20th of October,[2] they were pledged to yield all their possessions at Poggibonsi, to cede Tornano and its tower, to observe the boundaries adjudged by Ogerio, in every direction, and to leave Montepulciano unmolested. The prisoners on either side were exchanged.

But this war already betokens the advent of a new period in Florentine history. The conquest of the *contado* was no longer in question, for the Republic already possessed it in full. With the growing prosperity born of its numerous victories, the city had now to open roads for its vast commerce. It was not only the vagueness of their respective frontiers and the wish to enlarge them that caused Sienna and Florence to be continually at strife ; it was their commercial rivalry in the markets of Italy, and especially as regarded the trade with Rome ; this near

[1] Sanzanome, pp. 139–40; Hartwig, ii. 111–12.

[2] Santini, i. doc. lviii. and lix. A great number of Siennese swore to the treaty in the presence of the Podestà Gualfredotto Grasselli, *vice et nomine Comunis Florentie recipienti*, without the *consiliarii*. But the ceremony being very lengthy, he delegated Ildebrandino Cavalcanti to represent him, *procuratoris nomine*. Some of the documents of this peace are in Florence, the others in Sienna. The former were discovered by Santini, and all are mentioned by Hartwig, ii. 113–14.

neighbour having become, through the widespread relations of the Church, the principal centre of financial affairs in the civilised world. For some time past it had been the aim of Florence to obtain a monoply of these affairs, and this was one reason why she had always adhered to the Guelphs. She had had frequent disputes with Arezzo, Volterra, and above all with Sienna, as being the most powerful city on the road to Rome. So the two rivals were perpetually stirred to fresh and fiercer strife. So, too, before long, the irresistible need of Florence for free communication with the sea became the chief cause of her equally long and sanguinary wars with Pisa, the city barring her way to the coast. But as this conflict had not yet begun, the subject will be resumed in due time. In fact, the peace of Sienna was followed by some years of truce with foreign foes, although there was little peace within the city, where the seeds of civil war were already on the point of bursting forth.

The foreign Podestà, unattended and unchecked by the former councillor-consuls, as they might be called, has now become a settled institution; and, save for their brief re-establishment during 1211 and 1212, the Consuls, as already related, have vanished for ever. This was undeniably a triumph for the patricians, to whom the working people had bent for the nonce, in order to secure their co-operation in the difficult task of reducing the *contado* to submission. The achievement of this conquest gave an extraordinary impulse to trade, and by opening an increasingly wide field for commercial enterprise, induced the desire to develop it still more. Hence, it was not to be expected that a republic whose prosperity and strength were wholly based on its industry and commerce, could or would be satisfied, in the long run, with a government suited to nobles, whose constant tendency was to grow stronger, haughtier, and more overbearing. From this

moment, therefore, a struggle between the people and the patricians (*grandi*) was inevitable. The long series of civil wars, lacerating the city and staining its stones with blood, is in fact on the point of beginning.

CHAPTER IV.

STATE OF PARTIES — CONSTITUTION OF THE FIRST POPULAR GOVERNMENT AND OF THE GREATER GUILDS IN FLORENCE.[1]

I.

AFTER the office of Podestà had been permanently established in 1207, its main favourers and promoters, the aristocrats, became more daring, and forming a military organisation, of which the Podestà was the head, took a more active part in all wars abroad. Everything seemed progressing rapidly and well, when the Buondelmonti affair in 1215 caused an outbreak of civil war. Dissension was already lurking among certain of the nobles, and particularly between the Buondelmonti on the one hand, the Uberti and Fifanti on the other, either side numbering many adherents. Accordingly, in the hope of pacifying the dispute, a marriage was arranged between Bundelmonte Buondelmonti and a maiden of the Amidei house. But when all the preliminaries were concluded, the wife of Forese Donati called Buondelmonti to her and said: "Oh! shameful knight, to take to wife a woman of the Uberti and Fifanti. 'Twere better and worthier to choose this bride."

[1] This chapter was originally published in the *Politecnico* of Milan, numbers for July and September, 1866.

So saying, she pointed to her own daughter. Buondelmonti accepted the offer, and, forsaking his betrothed, speedily married the girl. Thereupon the kinsfolk and friends of the deserted maiden assembled in the Amidei palace and vowed to avenge her wrongs. It was then that Mosca Lamberti turned to those charged to execute revenge, saying, "Whoever deals a light blow or wound, may prepare for his own grave." And then, to show that the quarrel was to the death, he added the memorable words: "Once done, 'tis done with" ("*Cosa fatta, capo ha*"). So bloodshed was ordained.

It was the Easter Day of 1215. The handsome young knight Buondelmonti, elegantly attired and with a wreath on his head, mounted his white horse and crossed from Oltrarno by the old bridge. He had reached the statue of Mars, when he was suddenly attacked. Schiatta degli Uberti hurled him to the ground with a blow from his mace, and the other conspirators quickly fell upon him and severed his veins with their knives. Afterwards the corpse was placed on a bier, the bride supporting the head of her murdered husband, and both carried in procession round the city, to move men to fresh deeds of hatred and revenge.[1] And this was the beginning of the series of internecine wars, from which many chroniclers date the origin of the Guelph and Ghibelline factions in Florence. No modern historian, however, will be apt to attribute so vast an importance to a private feud, nor to believe that a breach of promise to an Amidei maiden could be the real primary cause of the party strife that from the year 1177 had already more than once drenched the city in blood. Even Villani, although considering the

[1] The details of this event are differently told by Villani (v. 38), by the pseudo Brunetto Latini (*ad annum*), and by Dino Compagni at the beginning of his Chronicle. But the gist is the same in all three, and we have mainly adhered to the first and second authorities, whose accounts are longer and more detailed than that of Compagni.

Buondelmonti affair to be the origin of the Guelphs and Ghibellines, is careful to add : "Nevertheless, long before this, the noble citizens had split into sects and into the said parties, by reason of the quarrels and disputes between the Church and the Empire." [1] The Buondelmonti catastrophe, with all the private enmities it involved, undoubtedly served to inflame the political passions of two already existent parties, which now, in the days of Frederic II., acquired a political importance of a far wider nature by their connection with the general affairs of Italy. It was only then that the parties in Florence assumed the German appellations of Guelphs and Ghibellines. Also, it is worthy of remark that July, 1215, was the date of the second Frederic's state progress to Aix la Chapelle, to be crowned king of Germany, a fact of some significance, as regards the history of parties in Italy. This may easily explain why the chroniclers should have attributed to the Buondelmonti tragedy, occurring in the same year, the origin of the Guelphs and Ghibellines. The names began then it is true, but the parties were of older date.

Villani's Chronicle (v. 39) now gives a list of the principal Guelph and Ghibelline families, showing that the majority of the older houses was almost invariably Ghibellines, whereas the Guelph party included many "of no great antiquity," but "already beginning to be powerful." Later on, when the Ghibellines are destroyed, we shall find the Guelph nobles merged in the party of the well-to-do burghers (*popolo grasso*). At present these patricians, being hostile to the Uberti, begin to make advances to newly enriched families, and even to the people, by siding with the Church. Fortunately Pope Innocent III. started a Crusade at this time, and thus many powerful Florentines went to the East and employed their fighting powers in a better cause. At the siege of Damietta, in fact, they dis-

[1] Villani, v. 38.

tinguished themselves greatly: Bonaguisa dei Bonaguisi the first to scale the walls, planted the banner of the Republic beside the Christian flag. In Giovanni Villani's time this banner was still preserved and held in the greatest honour.

In 1218 Florence resumed hostilities in the *contado*, and by 1220 had subdued various castles and domains, and exacted oaths of fealty from all defeated foes. But immediately afterwards a far graver war broke out with Pisa. The jealousy of the two rival republics was always on the increase, and for some time past each had struggled against the other for absolute commercial supremacy in Tuscany. Pisa commanded the sea, Florence the mainland, therefore each city required the other's help. Hence, in spite of repeated agreements and treaties, their mutual jealousy remained undiminished. The Florentines adhered steadfastly to the Church; the Pisans to the Empire. Things had gradually become inflamed to so high a pitch that the smallest trifle was enough to excite war, or rather to provoke the endless series of wars destined to change the character of the Tuscan factions.

In fact, the first pretext for strife, at least as related by Villani (vi. 2), is futile to the point of utter absurdity. Many ambassadors attended the coronation of the Emperor Frederic II. in Rome (1220), and among them, says the chronicler, were those of Pisa and Florence, who had long eyed one another with distrust. It chanced that one of the Florentine ambassadors, while feasting with a cardinal, begged the gift of a certain very beautiful dog, and his host promised to grant it. The next day the cardinal entertained the Pisans, and one of them, happening to make the same request, the animal was promised likewise to him. But the Florentine, being the first to send for the dog, he actually obtained it. This

led to quarrels and violence, not only on the part of the ambassadors and their trains, but also between all the Pisans and Florentines in Rome at the time. We can hardly assign any historical value to this tale ; but it shows that the amount of ill-feeling between the rival states rendered any trifle a sufficient pretext for bloodshed. The real fact, even according to the testimony of Sanzanome, is that Pisans and Florentines came to blows in Rome. The Pisans were the assailants, but had the worst of the bout. There was great wrath in Pisa at the news of the riot, and as a speedy reprisal all Florentine merchandise in the town was made confiscate. Florence then seems to have done her utmost to avoid open war, but to no purpose. Preparations went on for some time on either side, and then in 1222, when war had burst forth between the Lucchese and Pisans, the Florentines profited by the opportunity to attack the latter near Castel del Bosco, defeated them, and, according to the chroniclers, carried off thirteen hundred prisoners. Other attacks ensued, and various small castles were captured between this time and 1228, when we see the Florentines engaged in more serious strife with the Pistoians, and reducing them to accept their terms. It is in 1228 that we find the first mention of the *Carroccio* on a Florentine battlefield.[1] The Milanese had been the first to use the *Carroccio*, but in course of time, and with slight modifications, the custom had been adopted by the other Italian cities, who, with increasing wars and larger forces, recognised the need of a rallying point in their midst. The *Carroccio* was a chariot drawn by oxen with scarlet trappings and surmounted by two lofty poles bearing the great banner of the Republic, swinging its red and white folds on high. Behind, on a smaller car, came the bell, called the *Martinella*, to ring out military orders. For

[1] Villani, vi. 5.

some time before a war was proclaimed the *Martinella* was attached to the door of Sta Maria in the New Market, and rung there to warn both citizens and enemies to make ready for action. The *Carroccio* was always surrounded by a guard of picked men ; its surrender was considered as the final defeat and humiliation of the army.

Another prolonged and sanguinary conflict with Sienna was undertaken and resumed almost yearly from 1227 to 1235. The Siennese suffered severe losses, but were able to seize Montepulciano, demolish its towers and ramparts, and do some damage to Montalcino, which had joined alliance with the Florentines. The latter, however, not only devastated the Siennese *contado* time after time, and captured a large number of prisoners, but also besieged the hostile capital, and although failing to win it, pressed close enough to the walls to hurl donkeys over them with catapults, to prove their contempt for the town. Finally, through the mediation of the Pope, peace was concluded very advantageously for Florence. The Siennese had to forfeit a large sum of money for the rebuilding of the walls and towers of Montepulciano, were sworn to leave that territory for ever unmolested, and likewise compelled to repair the castle of Montalcino, at the pleasure of the Florentines, who still retained their hold on Poggibonsi.

II.

Thus, throughout all these wars, in which the influence of Pope and emperor was felt on this or the other side, we are enabled to trace the gradual formation of parties in Tuscany, and to witness the process by which the political and commercial supremacy of Florence was built up. Her present rivals, Sienna and Pisa, both adhere to

the Empire ; whereas Florence clings more and more closely to the Church. Pisa shuts her out from the sea : hence the origin of their mutual rivalry and continual strife. How, indeed, could war be avoided, when the commercial power of Florence felt the increasingly imperative need of free access to the coast ? Sienna, on the other hand, competed with Florence by trying to get all the affairs of the Roman *curia* into the hands of its own bankers, those affairs being so numerous and lucrative as to enrich all concerned with them. These continual jealousies invariably urged Pisa and Sienna to favour the Empire. Lucca, as the rival of Pisa, inclined towards Florence, and became Guelph. Pistoia, planted between two Guelph cities, and continually menaced by them, naturally adopted the Ghibelline cause. Thus, the division of parties in Tuscany afterwards reacted on the formation of Florentine sects, and as the latter began to assume a more general character, through the growing influence of Frederic II. in Italy, they adopted the German names of Guelphs and Ghibellines. The Florentine Republic, having triumphed over Pisa, Sienna, and Pistoia, was virtually the chief power in Tuscany ; but had one danger to face, in the possible augmentation of Frederic's power. Frederic II. was the enemy of the Pope, who had excommunicated him, and of all Guelphs ! He had gone away for a time to lead the Crusade in the East ; was now in Germany engaged in a struggle with his rebellious son, and all this had greatly advanced the fortunes of Florence. But he was about to return to Italy, and his presence might again embolden the foes of the Republic.

Meanwhile, under the rule of successive Podestà, Florence had prospered in war, and devoted times of peace to internal organisation and embellishment. At the instance of the Podestà Torello da Strada (1233) all

the male inhabitants of the *contado* were summoned to inscribe their names and specify their condition, whether freemen, serfs, or dependents, with a view to ascertaining the real state of the population and providing for its better government. In 1237–38 the Podestà Rubaconte da Mandello built a new bridge over the Arno, which was first designated by his own name of Rubaconte, and afterwards as the Ponte alle Grazie, in honour of an adjoining church. It was also by order of the same Podestà that all the streets of Florence were first paved, and other works completed for the improvement of the public health, or the decoration of the city. Thus a magistrate originally appointed—according to the chroniclers—to do the work of an ordinary judge is seen gradually fulfilling the functions of the head of the Republic. And the patricians over whom he presided daily rose to greater power and daring, and particularly when the arrival of Frederic II. began to encourage the Ghibelline party throughout Italy. In fact, when Breseia was besieged by the Ghibellines in 1237, we find many Florentine nobles in their camp. Every day brought fresh proofs that the emperor might count on many friends and much assistance from Florence. Consequently numerous riots took place, for the Guelph nobles offered violent opposition and joined with the people, which was entirely Guelph.[1] In 1240 we find that three citizens were nominated to collect funds in aid of the Imperial army: surely a strange proceeding in a republic[2] where

[1] Villani (vi. 33) says: "Albeit the said parties existed among the nobles of Florence, and they oftentimes came to blows from private enmities, and were split into factions by the said parties," nevertheless the people "remained united, for the good and honour and dignity of the Republic" (vol. i. p. 253). The "Annales," ii., of the year 1236 relate that the palaces of the Commune and of the Galigai were destroyed, which would certainly seem to be a proof of a genuine revolution.

[2] Ammirato, "Storie," lib. xi. (with additions made by Ammirato the younger). Anno 1240.

the mass of the population was thoroughly Guelph! But it is not surprising that such events should have inevitably caused a reaction.

Already in 1246 Frederic II. had appointed his natural son, Frederic of Antioch, vicar-general of Tuscany, and also sent other vicars to Florence to fill the office of Podestà. This aroused discontent on the part of the Guelph nobles, who wished their own faction to regain the upper hand in the city. About this time, 1247, Frederic was in Lombardy,[1] and at almost open war with the Pope, who continued to launch excommunications at him, deprived him of the Imperial title, and stirred enemies from all sides against him. Accordingly, Frederic sent messengers to the Uberti in Florence, advising them that the moment had come for them to assume the government of Florence. Provided they had the courage to fly to arms, his succour would not be long delayed. The Uberti were not deaf to his words. The heads of the chief Ghibelline houses met in council and decided on immediate resort to violence. There was instant division in the city; the Ghibelline aristocracy on one side, the Guelph nobles, with all the people on the other; and the alarm bell was pealed. Fighting went on from street to street, by day and by night, behind barricades, from tower-roofs, and with catapults, rams, and other engines of war. As the popular excitement increased the strife became general. The Ghibellines had the advantage of superior military training; they were confident of receiving reinforcements; and, massed

[1] In this year we find the first official mention of the Florentine Guelphs. Frederic II. complains of their conduct, saying: "Pars Guelforum Florentiae, cui dudum nostra Maiestas pepercerat." The "Annales," ii., first name the Guelphs in 1239, and in 1242 mention the Guelphs and the Ghibellines. *Vide* Hartwig, "Quellen," &c., vol. ii. pp. 159–60 and 164. This author believes that the names of the two Florentine parties first came into use in the year 1239.

under one leader, took all their orders from the Uberti palaces. The people, on the contrary, fought at random, and were soon surrounded and repulsed. Nevertheless, at one moment their very defeat seemed about to win them the victory. Hard-pressed on all sides, they were gradually driven back towards the chain barricades (*serraglio*) of the Bagnesi and Guidalotti mansions; and being massed about this defence, fought so vigorously as almost to regain their former position. But just then the Imperial contingent appeared on the scene, and all was lost. The vicar-general Frederic, son of the emperor, entered Florence at the head of sixteen hundred German knights, and made furious charges on the people. The latter opposed a sturdy resistance, prolonging the fight for three days, but it was a vain struggle. The Ghibellines were victorious on all sides, and the emperor could have sent fresh reinforcements if required. One of the most valiant of the Guelphs, Rustico Marignolli, who had borne the standard of the people throughout the mêlée, fell wounded to the death by a shot in the face from a cross-bow. Thereupon the leaders of the party finally decided to surrender and fly into exile on Candlemas night (February 2, 1249). All those resolved on flight gathered together fully armed, and taking possession of Marignolli's corpse, bore it away in a solemn procession with a crowd of *popolani*, and a great show of weapons and torches, to celebrate the funeral at San Lorenzo by night. The bier was carried on the shoulders of the worthiest cavaliers, and the defeated but not dishonoured banner hung trailing from it to the ground. The whole function resembled a pact of vengeance sworn on the body of the dead warrior rather than a mere burial ceremony.

After this the leading Guelphs fled the city and took refuge in neighbouring castles; the same in fact from which, at the cost of much blood, they had once ousted the feudal

lords. These latter, having been compelled to settle in the town, had now won their revenge for past injuries. Thirty-six Guelph houses were pulled down : among them the Tosinghi palace in the New Market, a building measuring one hundred and thirty-five feet in height, and faced with many tiers of marble columns. Party hatred reached such a pitch as to justify the belief expressed by many that the Ghibellines had positively decreed the destruction of San Giovanni, because the Guelphs had used that church as a place of assembly. It was affirmed that the victors had undermined the foundations of the adjoining Guardamorto tower, hoping that this might fall down on the temple and crush it. The failure of the attempt was attributed to the fact that the tower had miraculously fallen in another direction. A more credible account is given by Vasari. He says that the Guardamorto was only demolished in order to widen the Piazza, and that Niccolò Pisano, being charged with the work, cut the tower in two and arranged its fall in a way to avoid any damage to the church or neighbouring houses.

At all events, this proved the beginning of the long list of savage reprisals darkening the history of Florence, when the winning faction not only destroyed the dwellings of the defeated, but banished their foes *en masse*. The Ghibellines were now masters of all, and for their greater security retained the services of Count Giordano Lancia and his eight hundred Germans. It seemed as though the party, being of Teutonic origin, could not yet grasp the reins of government without the support of German soldiery, and could only command the Republic in the emperor's name. This was the final result of admitting the Imperial feudal nobility within the walls of Florence, and allowing them to institute a political and military chief instead of an ordinary judge in the person of the Podestà.

III.

The Ghibelline victory over the Guelphs of Florence in 1249, with all its violence and bloodshed, was by no means an assured triumph. The Ghibellines had destroyed free institutions and exiled a vast number of adversaries; aided by the Imperial vicar, Giordano Lancia and his eight hundred men, they were absolute masters of Florence; nevertheless, the populace, the burghers, and the greater part of the citizens still remained Guelphs. Besides, Pope Innocent III. roused so many enemies against the emperor in Italy, that the latter's success was destined to a speedy decline. The Florentine exiles were biding their time in neighbouring strongholds, and above all in the Castles of Montevarchi and Capraia in the upper and lower Val d'Arno. From these points they made frequent skirmishing expeditions, clearly showing that they had by no means lost hope of soon re-entering the city. Accordingly, the conquerors had to be perpetually on the alert against them to provide against some sudden attack restoring them to power.

Therefore Ghibellines and Germans marched against Montevarchi; but almost the whole storming force was killed or captured. This defeat opened the eyes of the Florentine Ghibellines to the danger of their position, and decided them to lay regular siege to the Castle of Capraia, headquarters of the principal Guelphs, chiefs of the party or League, as it was called at the time, directing all the movements of the rest. Although the beleaguering force greatly outnumbered their own, the besieged decided on an obstinate defence, and the Ghibellines were bent on winning the castle either by violence or starvation. But they would have failed to accomplish this but for the arrival of reinforcements from the emperor, who, having

been compelled to raise the siege of Parma, had now advanced into Tuscany. But, in spite of these fresh foes, hunger alone drove the Guelphs to surrender. Their leaders were given up to Frederic II., who was then at Fucecchio. He carried them with him to the kingdom of Naples, and, according to the Florentine chroniclers, had them barbarously blinded, beaten to death with clubs, or drowned in the sea, with the exception of one alone, whose life was spared after his eyes had been torn out.

By this time the emperor was irritated and exhausted by the continual wars thrust on him by the Papacy. He had enjoyed no peace since the day (June 24, 1243) when Sinibaldo de Fieschi ascended the Chair of St. Peter as Pope Innocent IV. This pontiff had pronounced his deposition at the Council of Lyons in 1245. He had then secretly excited many conspiracies against him, and attempted more or less to ensure their success. The emperor had been led to suspect his most devoted friend and secretary, Pier delle Vigne, of complicity in one of these plots. Accordingly this faithful servant was thrown into the tower of San Miniato al Tedesco, condemned to lose his eyes, and then transferred to another prison in Pisa, where he dashed out his brains against the wall. Frederic's spirit was alternately cowed and irritated by the hostility he encountered; for, with all his philosophy and unbelief, he greatly dreaded the thunders of the Vatican. He sought reconciliation with the Pope, wished to return to the East to fight the infidels; and Innocent chose that moment to rouse all the Guelph cities against him, thus again forcing him to fly to arms to support the Ghibelline cause and maintain his own sway over Italy.

This he was unable to effect without recurring, as we have seen, to incredible excesses of violence, which naturally increased the number of his enemies on all sides. The Guelphs of Germany had already refused to

acknowledge the authority of his son Corrado, whom he had sent as his representative. The army commanded by the emperor in person had been routed at Parma. All the Guelph cities of Romagna, with Bölogna at their head, marched a powerful force against the Ghibellines under King Enzo, another of Frederic's natural sons, and defeated them at the battle of Fossalta on May 26, 1249. Enzo himself was captured and carried in triumph to Bologna, where he remained a prisoner till his death in 1271. But the emperor did not live long enough to feel this last blow. On December 13, 1250, he ceased to breathe in a castle near Lucera in Apulia, and his death completed the downfall of the Ghibelline party in Florence and throughout Italy. For religious hatred was now combined with political enmity against this party. Not only because the Ghibellines combated the Pope, but still more, because the various heresies gradually spreading through Italy found many followers in their ranks, in consequence of frequent marks of tolerance and favour received from the emperor. The heretical poison now slowly infecting the Italian social body was a grave anxiety to the Popes. The Albigenses had first roused attention and found adherents in Provence, where native bards had devoted their talents to attacking the Roman Court. But the religious orders of St. Francis and St. Dominic were bent on crushing the new creed. Innocent III. had founded the Holy Inquisition for the same purpose, and St. Dominic, at the head of mobs thirsting for heretic blood, had ordained the massacre of the Albigenses and ravaged all Provence. Some fugitives, however, had escaped into Italy, to spread the same hatred against Rome, the same poison of heresy. In fact, the *Paterini*, opposed to the Pope, denying the virginity of the Madonna, and having no belief in transubstantiation

or other dogmas of the Catholic faith, found followers everywhere and held public gatherings. The Epicurean, Averrhoistic, and other philosophical tenets were rapidly propagated among Italian scholars. For some time, during the most brilliant period of the Imperial Court in Sicily, all this intellectual and religious turmoil seemed to be chiefly centred at Palermo. For there Frederic II. had gathered about him a throng of scholars, troubadours, poets of every kind, Musselmans, Greek schismatics, Provençal Albigenses, and materialistic philosophers; and although a crusader and persecutor of heretics, took singular delight in this mixed society, in whose midst, and in a storm of sarcasm, doubt, and hatred of priests, Italian poetry first sprang to life, and later on, in the Divine Comedy, gave forth so great a wealth of earnest faith and lofty aspiration. In the meantime, however, heresy and scepticism were current throughout the Peninsula. The *Paterini* quickly obtained many converts among the Ghibellines in Florence, and the Pope established the Inquisition there for the trial and punishment of backsliders. In 1244 Fra Pietro of Verona, moved by religious fury rather than zeal, came to stir the orthodox spirit by his inflammatory sermons; and founded the Society of the Captains of Holy Mary or of Faith, composed of men and women vowed to the extermination of heretics. Public feeling caught fire in 1245, and a real battle between Catholics and heretics raged in the Florence streets. Both at Santa Felicità and in the space by the Croce al Trebbio, where a column still commemorates the ill-fated event, the *Captains of the Faith*, robed in white, bearing the badge of the cross, and commanded by their big, strong, dare-devil chief, Friar Pietro of Verona, routed the *Paterini* and drove them from Florence. In reward for this sanguinary triumph the friar was appointed Inquisitor of

Tuscany, and subsequently of Lombardy as well. There in the north, between Milan and Como, he finally met his death at the hands of men wearied of his persecutions. This gained him the title of a martyred saint, and he was known henceforth as St. Peter—Martyr of Verona.[1]

IV.

Meanwhile, in 1250, the year now claiming our attention, Frederic II. passed away, his son Enzo lay captive in Bologna, Innocent IV. was stirring the Guelphs to action, and Pietro of Verona had become the scourge of all heretics and foes of the Papacy in Tuscany and Lombardy. Accordingly the Ghibelline domination in Florence was approaching its end. In fact, from the moment that the emperor withdrew into Apulia, already stricken with mortal disease, the Guelphs showed so much boldness that the Ghibellines decided on a fresh expedition to oust them from the Castle of Ostina, in the Valdarno, where they had assembled in great force. But while laying siege to the stronghold the Ghibellines were compelled to keep a strong reserve at Figline to protect their rear from the many Guelph partisans lurking at Montevarchi. The latter, however, made a night attack on the force encamped at Figline, and routed it so thoroughly that when the news reached Ostina the Ghibellines raised the siege and marched back to the capital. Thereupon both the people and burghers of Florence, tired of the unbearable load of taxation imposed on them by the continual wars undertaken by the Ghibellines, and worn out by the "grave extortions and acts of violence of these tyrannical masters," felt that the moment for vengeance had

[1] Lami, "Antichità Toscane," lesson xv.; Passerini, "Istituti di Beneficenza—Il Bigallo." Florence: Le Monnier, 1853.

come, and rose in open revolt. The rebels were led by the more influential citizens of the so-called middle class, then acting as heads of the people. These men first held their sittings in the Church of San Firenze, then in Santa Croce, and finally, still dreading attack from the Uberti, assembled in smaller numbers and with greater safety in the houses of the Anchioni family. Here, in October, 1250, they proclaimed the nomination of thirty-six "Corporals of the people," six to each *sestiere*, forming the basis of the third Florentine Constitution, known as the First Popular Government (*Primo Popolo*), because its main purpose was to organise and strengthen the people in opposition to the nobles, and by this time the latter being much disheartened, unresistingly submitted to the new government. The first measure adopted was the dismissal of all the magistrates in office, and reforms were then undertaken. The post of Podestà was retained, and henceforth this official became still more exclusively the head of the patricians, being now counterbalanced by the newly instituted Captain of the people, as chief of the *popolani*. But, as in this way the Republic was divided in two parts, a central, presiding body was established consisting of twelve elders (*anziani*) of the people, two for each *sestiere*. These *anziani* had some of the attributes of the Consuls of former days, with this difference, however, that not only were they men of the people, but that the chief government of the city was now entrusted to the Podestà and the Captain. In fact, the new and most important part of the reform was this institution of a Captain as commander of the people, who were now organised on a military footing. The city was divided into twenty armed companies, with twenty gonfalons or banners, under as many gonfalonieri. The *contado*, on the contrary, was organised in ninety-six companies, corresponding with its ninety-six existing

parishes (*pivieri*). These town and country companies combined formed a united popular militia, ready for action at any moment, either against foreign foes or to curb patrician tyranny at home. The whole of this armed multitude was under the orders of the Captain, and as he combined the functions of tribune, general, and judge, he afterwards bore the additional titles of *Defender of the Guilds and the People*, *Captain of all the Guelphs*, &c. Similarly to the Podestà, the Captain held office for one year, and it was indispensable that he should be a Guelph, a noble, and an alien. He came to Florence provided with his own judges, knights, and war-horses, inasmuch as he was leader of the people in war and administrator of justice in times of peace. But, as we have already stated, the Podestà still retained his civil and military importance. In right of his office, he had to give judgment in all civil and criminal cases, those reserved for the Captain's decision being usually acts of violence committed by the *grandi* against the people, questions regarding taxes or valuations, and certain cases of extortion, perjury, and violence, provided these had not been already cited before the Podestà, or unless he should have refused them his attention.[1] Also, in the above-mentioned cases, the Captain was likewise empowered to adjudge capital punishment. The red and white gonfalon or banner of the people was in his charge, and by ringing the bell of the so-called Lion's Tower he summoned the people to assembly. He resided in the Badia, together with the elders, who acted as his counsellors in many respects. Messer Uberto of Lucca was the first Captain of the people. As to the Podestà, although certain writers, misled by the somewhat obscure

[1] *Vide* "Statuta Populi et Communis Florentiae," published in Florence, but with the mark of the Friburg press, vol. i.; Cantini, "Saggi," vol. iii. chap. xvi.; "Delizie degli Eruditi Toscani," vol. ix. p. 256 and fol.

statements of Villani and Malespini, believed his office to have been at least temporarily abolished, it is certain that he remained at the head of what was specially called the Commune.[1] He, too, had his companies of armed men, and likewise commanded the mounted bands composed almost exclusively of nobles, the bowmen and cross-bowmen, bucklermen (*palvesari*), &c., forming conjointly the so-called host, or nucleus of regulars in the mass of the Republican army. The Podestà was often commander-in-chief of the whole army, but his special function was the command of the cavalry and the host (*oste*).[2] And for the further enhancement of his dignity, it was decided to build a great and monumental palace,[3] in which he was to hold residence with his attendant officers and counsellors. But, on the other hand, as nothing was neglected to increase the strength of the people against the patricians, it was decreed that the towers of all powerful houses should be cut down so that none should exceed the height of seventy-five feet (fifty *braccia*), and the superfluous material was used to wall in the city on the south side of the river (*oltr' Arno*).[4]

This third constitution of Florence, known as the *Primo Popolo*, or First Popular Government, was in fact a politico-military constitution, dividing the Republic into two halves, the Commune and the people, and in which the aristocrats and democrats formed, as it were, two opposing camps. The army was marshalled under the

[1] Villani says: "They stripped all power from the Podestà then in Florence, and dismissed all the officers" (vi. 39). As usual, Malespini copies from Villani (chap. cxxxvii.). But reading farther we see clearly that the Podestà was elected as before, and that a palace was built for his use. The chronicler's real meaning was that the form of government was changed, and the actual governors dismissed from office. The term Podestà was used in its general sense of magistrate-in-chief.

[2] Villani, vol. vi. pp. 39 and 40. *Vide* also Coppo Stefani.

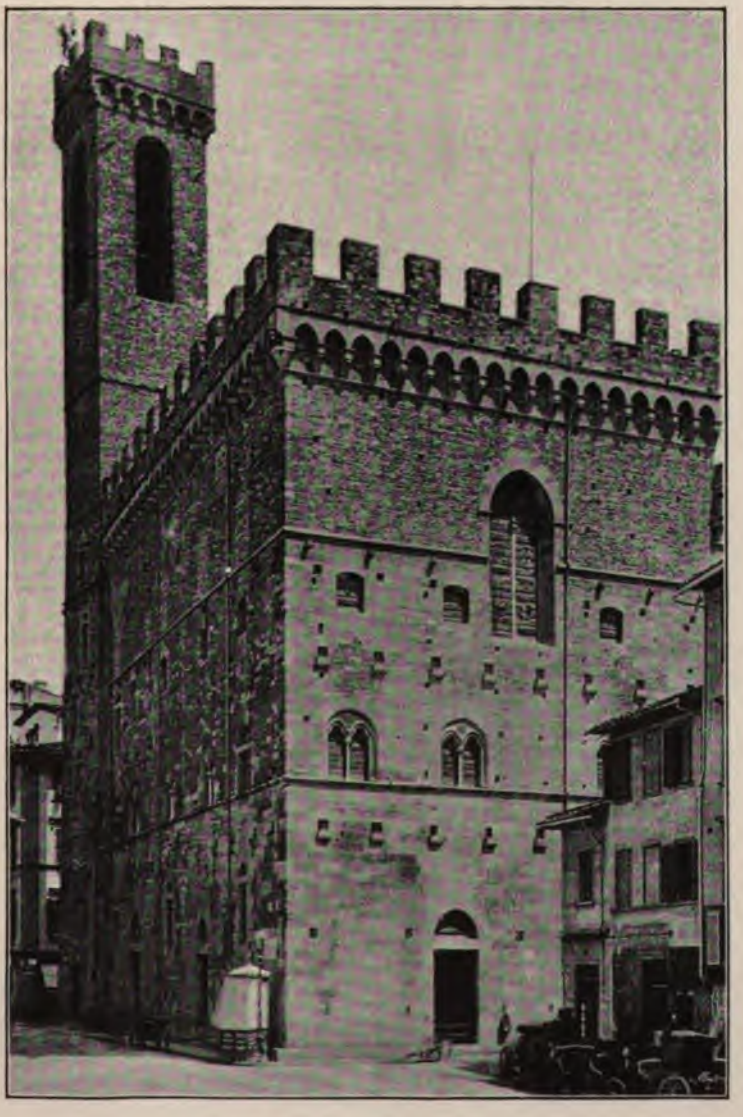
[3] It is thought to be the work of Lapo or Jacopo, the supposed master of Arnolfo Brunelleschi.

[4] Villani, vi. 39.

banners both of the Commune and the people; all important measures required the sanction both of the Commune and the people. A similar division of authority may seem strange at this day, but it was common enough in the Middle Ages. It was customary to many Tuscan cities, and we find an example of it at Bŏlogna, where the nobility and people formed, as it were, two distinct republics, having different laws and statutes, and two separate palaces for their respective magistrates. At Milan we find a tripartite republic in the Credenza dei Consoli, the Motta, and the Credenza di Sant Ambrogio, consisting respectively of the greater and middle nobility and the people. This seemed a perfectly natural arrangement, seeing that social conditions are reflected in the institutions to which they give birth; the social body was divided, because it owed its origin to the struggle between the Latin and Teutonic races, between conquerors and conquered. Accordingly, the remote heirs of either race stood arrayed in two opposite camps, armed and prepared for conflict.[1]

In this state of things it is easy to understand why the central government had so little authority in Florence, and why, during the continual clash of opposing interests and jealousies, the power of the Podestà and the Captain

[1] *Vide* Marchionne di Coppo Stefani, "Storia Fiorentina," bk. ii. rubric 63. In relating the first rupture of the Guelphs and Ghibellines, the author says: "Almost all the families on the Ghibelline, or Imperial side, were nobles of the *contado*, because these held lands or castles in fief from the Empire." Also Ammirato, who was well versed in contemporary chronicles and documents, in relating what was said by men of the people as to the reforms of 1250, makes them continue their statement that the Uberti, as leaders of the nobles, were the authors of all the misfortunes of Florence, with the following words: "Who but the Uberti waste our substance and our strength by exorbitant taxes and imposts? These haughty men deemed it an honourable thing, among their other grand and noble usages, to be our foes; inasmuch as, exulting in their descent from the princes of Germany, they consider us to be churls and peasants, and despise us, as though we were of a different clay from their own." Ammirato, "Storie," bk. ii. *ad annum.*



PALACE OF THE PODESTÀ, FLORENCE.

should have steadily increased. The former, although his functions were now shared by other magistrates, still remained the chief official representative of the Republic; for he signed treaties of peace, accepted concessions of territory in that capacity, received oaths of submission to Florence from other towns, and, as in times past, still continued to preside over two councils—*i.e.*, the Special and the General, respectively composed of ninety and of three hundred members. The Captain had likewise two councils, the which, according to the usage of the time, consisted of a Special Council, or *credenza*, of eighty members, making, in junction with the Council-General, a total of three hundred. This body included the elders, the heads of guilds, the gonfaloniers of companies, and others, and, unlike the councils of the Podestà, to which nobles were admitted, solely consisted of plebeians. Members of the Special Council frequently sat in the General Assembly, which was therefore usually styled the General and Special Council of the Podestà, or the Captain, as the case might be. The elders had a privy council of their own, composed of thirty-six plebeian worthies; and the parliament must not be forgotten, although at the time of which we are treating it was only summoned on occasions of exceptional importance. But, as will be shown, some time elapsed before these councils were established on a definite basis; none for the moment, save those of the Podestà, which were of older origin, having any settled formation.[1] At any rate, the Republic, as regarded its general outline, was ordered in the following manner: the elders, the council of thirty-six, and the parliament, formed a central government, already much weakened, however, by the

[1] In fact, Villani only mentions them at a much later date. But there is documentary evidence of their previous existence. *Vide*, for instance, the "Arch. Stor. Ital.," Series iii. vol. xxiii. p. 222. Doc. dated April 30, 1251. *Vide* M. di Coppo Stefani, rub. 90.

constitution and growing strength of the Commune and people, inasmuch as these latter, commanded by the Podestà and Captain, and with their respective greater and lesser councils, formed, as it were, two opposing republics. The Commune undoubtedly enjoyed superior authority and legal importance; but the popular party became daily bolder and more numerous. Before long, in fact, ancient families began to change their names and drop their titles, in order to join the ranks of the people.

The great political writers of Florence differed in opinion with regard to the new constitution. Donato Giannotti censured it, declaring it to be "a cause of sedition, instead of a bond of peace and concord, because the founders of that government directed it entirely against the nobles, its former rulers in the days of Frederic, and who now being in constant fear of attack, were obliged to fly to arms on every occasion."[1] Machiavelli, on the contrary, praised the Constitution, and wound up by saying: "With these military and civil institutions the foundations of Florentine freedom were laid. Nor is it possible to imagine how much authority and strength Florence thereby gained in a short space. For she not only became the head of Tuscany, but was counted among the foremost of Italian cities, and might have risen to any height had she not been afflicted by new and frequent divisions."[2] Machiavelli judged rightly. Both contem-

[1] Giannotti, "Opere," ed. Le-Monnier, vol. i. p. 82.

[2] Machiavelli, "Storie," bk. ii. On this point it may be well to repeat our former remarks, to the effect that Machiavelli is often as inaccurate in his definition of facts as profound in his intuition of their character and tendency. After the first book of his "Storie," giving a general introduction to the Middle Ages, he begins to narrate the history of Florence in the second book. He was the first writer, after L. Aretino, to put aside nearly all the fabulous tales of the chroniclers touching the origins of Florence, and start from well-authenticated facts. For although he, too, believes that Florence was destroyed by Totila and rebuilt by Charlemagne, and even credits the destruction of Fiesole by the Florentines in 1010, it is easy to condone these blunders, remembering how

porary chroniclers of these events and the impartial voice of history fully confirm the truth of his words.

The city now began to be enriched by new public monuments. The Communal palace, otherwise known as the palace of the Podestà, rose from the ground, and the

many other legendary tales were rejected by him, and how much time elapsed before some germ of historic truth could be gleaned from the less incredible traditions to which he adhered. But why did Machiavelli pass over almost at one bound the interval between 1010 and 1215 without saying anything of the first and second Florentine constitutions, or alluding to the numerous deeds of war and political revolutions occurring during that period? Regarding these events, he might have derived information from the chroniclers. But he clings to the theory that the Buondelmonti tragedy was the primary cause and origin of all internecine strife in Florence, although the evidence of contemporary chroniclers and his own historical acumen might have saved him from this error. Continuing with the same strangely unaccountable negligence, he skips another period—from 1215 to 1250—saying that then at last Guelphs and Ghibellines came to an agreement, and "deemed the moment come to establish free institutions," almost as though this were the first time that the Florentines had contemplated organising a free government. Yet we have seen that Florentine liberties were assured, and the first constitution founded in 1115; that the constitution of 1250 was the third, not the first, and established by the Guelph *popolani*, to the hurt of the Ghibelline nobles, instead of being formed, as Machiavelli states, by the united efforts of the Guelphs and the Ghibellines. Nor is this the last of his blunders, for Machiavelli goes on to say: "Likewise to remove causes of enmity arising from judgments delivered, they [the Florentines] decreed the establishment of two foreign judges, with the respective titles of Captain and Podestà, authorised to administer justice to the citizens in all cases, whether civil or criminal. In this manner he converts the two chief political authorities into ordinary judges, places both on the same level, and fails to remark that, although the Captain was a newly created functionary, the Podestà had been in existence for more than half a century. He also states that the *carroccio* was instituted in 1250, to give prestige, or *maestà*, to the army, although the Florentines had adopted the use of the *carroccio* long before this date. He shows equal negligence in his account of the organisation of the army, and without drawing any distinction between the forces of the Commune and those of the people, although this point is fully elucidated by the chroniclers. Villani, for instance, tells us: "Inasmuch as we have treated of the gonfalons and banners of the people," it is fitting to make mention of those "of the knights and the army proper" (*guerra*). Nevertheless, whenever Machiavelli pauses to consider the general character of Florentine revolutions, and particularly of those subsequent to 1250, his definitions excel those of any other writer.

Santa Trinità bridge was built, chiefly at the expense of a private citizen. The gold florin was now issued, and, being mixed with the best alloy, speedily obtained currency[1] not only in all European markets, but even in the Levant, greatly to the advantage of Florentine commerce, which was daily becoming more widely extended. The nobles were discontented, of course, and hastened to show their ill-feeling, in 1251, by their almost unanimous refusal to join in the war against Pistoia. But when a few of them were sent into banishment the others soon quieted down. The Guelph exiles were recalled, adversaries within the city made peace, and now, that Frederic II. was dead, the aristocracy was kept in check by the strength and self-confidence of the popular party. Shortly afterwards external wars began, and these were carried on with so much success that the following ten years were known as the years of victory.

V.

This First, or Old Popular Government, as it was called, because it was in fact the first time that the people had a political and military organisation of their own, quickly asserted its strength. In order to give the spreading Florentine trade free access to the sea, without yet coming to blows with Pisa, the city concluded an agreement on April 30, 1251, with the Counts Aldobrandeschi, powerful lords of the Maremma, by which Florence was granted right of passage through their territories to Porto Talamone and Port' Ercole and the free use of these harbours for its merchandise.[2] Thereupon the Pisans, being naturally annoyed by this measure, hastened to contract an alliance

[1] November, 1252.
[2] "Arch. Stor. It.," Series iii. vol. xxiii. p. 220.

with Sienna, to which Pistoia also adhered. Thus the three Ghibelline cities were banded together against the Florentine Guelphs. Nor was this the worst. On July 24, 1251, the Ghibellines of Florence joined the League by a secret agreement with Sienna, binding either side to co-operate towards their common aim—*i.e.*, the triumph of their party throughout Tuscany. And as the other Ghibellines of the country-side naturally adhered to the treaty, the whole faction was united to the hurt of the Republic.

Then the Florentines, finding themselves surrounded by so many foes, began their defence by a rapid march on Pistoia, but the Ghibellines of the city refused to take part in a war openly directed against their cause. Accordingly, when the army returned from a successful skirmishing expedition, many leading Ghibellines, including the Uberti and the Lamberti, were driven into banishment. The affair must have been really serious, for the exiles hoisted the banner of the Republic, whereupon the State banner was changed, and instead of bearing the white lily on a red field, henceforth displayed the red lily on a white field ; but the flag of the people remained as before, half white and half red. During the summer of this year the Ubaldini, reinforced by a body of exiles, rose to arms in the Mugello, but suffered defeat. The Florentines at last realised the danger of their position. Therefore, with the help of their former friends the Lucchese, they concluded an alliance (August, 1251) with the town of San Miniato al Tedesco—where there was no Imperial vicar for the moment—renewed in September their former treaty with Orvieto, and in November made alliance with Genoa, which was still hostile to Pisa.

Thus the whole of Tuscany was divided between the Guelph and Ghibelline factions. The exiles, together with some German soldiers who had served under Frederic II.,

occupied the Castle of Montaia, belonging to Count Guido Novello, in the upper Val d'Arno. The Florentines marched to the assault of the stronghold towards the end of the year, but were ignominiously repulsed. On their return to the city, they rang the alarm-bell, collected a large force, again took the field, people and Commune combined, and pursued the war with energy during the month of January, regardless of frost and snow. The general condition of affairs in Tuscany enlarged the proportions of this war; for on the one side Lucchese troops co-operated with the Florentine army, while the exiles on the other received reinforcements from Pisa and Sienna. The First Popular Government now proved its mettle. The adversaries were driven off, the Castle of Mentaia captured and demolished, and its defenders were led captives to Florence in January, 1252.[1]

The Florentines then marched into the Pistoian territory, laid it waste, and halted to attack the Castle of Tizzano on their return. But while thus engaged they heard that the Pisans, having routed the Lucchese, were moving homewards with prisoners and spoil. Accordingly, they raised the siege, hastened in pursuit, and giving battle to the Pisans at Pontedera on July 1, 1252, completely defeated them. Even the Podestà of Pisa was captured, and another curious incident took place. The Lucchese prisoners who were being dragged to Pisa in bonds not only regained their liberty, but were enabled, by the help of the Florentines, to convey to Lucca as captives the same Pisans by whom they had been previously seized.

Meanwhile, profiting by the absence of the Florentine troops, the exiles and Count Guido Novello had taken refuge at Figline and made it the centre of continual skirmishing expeditions. Hence it was indispensable to unearth them all without delay. The town surrendered,

[1] Villani and Ammirato, *ad annum.*

but only on condition that the strangers defending its wall should be allowed to go free, and the exiles readmitted. This was granted, but then, in violation of the stipulated terms, Figline itself was sacked and burnt (August, 1852).[1]

But, the Sienese having simultaneously profited by the opportunity to lay siege to Montalcino, a strong castle on the Florentine border, the Republican forces hastened to its relief, and after routing its assailants and providing everything for the future defence of the stronghold, marched back to Florence in triumph.

These successes were not unproductive of results. For when the Florentines next attacked Pistoia in 1253, the town surrendered after a brief resistance, and agreed (February 1, 1254) to forsake the Ghibelline League, to grant readmittance to the Guelphs, and to be entirely at the service of Florence.[2] Thereupon the Florentines hastened to defend Montalcino against another attack by the Siennese; and thus the war with the latter, begun at the end of 1253, was vigorously pursued in 1254, to the month of June. Then, having lost many strongholds—some captured by Florentine arms, others gained by purchase from the Counts Guidi—Sienna was forced to end the war and tender submission. On their way back to Florence the victors reduced Poggibonsi, a large and important territory adhering to Sienna and the Ghibellines. They next proceeded to devastate the lands about Volterra, although the city itself seemed impregnable from the strength of its position. But when the Volterrani, counting upon this, ventured to sally forth and give battle, they were defeated and pursued with so much vigour, that the Florentines found themselves inside the city before they had even conceived the possibility of storming its walls.

[1] Villani, vi. 31. Ammirato, *ad annum.*

[2] Ammirato, *ad annum*, contains a summary of the treaty of peace.

There was such general alarm among the inhabitants that a great throng of old men, women, and children, with the bishop at their head, came as suppliants to make surrender. The Florentines showed much generosity, prohibiting pillage, and merely reforming the government of the city by transferring it to the Guelphs. And now Pisa, being bereft of all allies, finally agreed to surrender, and the terms were subscribed on August 4, 1254. As a result of this treaty the Florentines had right of passage through Pisa, with their merchandise, and exemption from all taxes, dues, or imposts, whether by sea or by land. Moreover, in all contracts made with them, the Pisans were bound to employ Florentine weights and measures, and also, to some extent, Florentine money. They yielded several districts and castles, that of Ripafratta included. And they were compelled to give 150 hostages to secure their observance of these conditions and of the friendship to which they were sworn. Shortly after this event Arezzo likewise made submission (25th of August), and accepted a Podestà from Florence.[1]

These were the "victorious years" of the First Popular Government, whose merits and virtues received such high praise from the chroniclers. Villani tells us, in words afterwards repeated by his plagiarist, Malespini, that it took "much pride in great and lofty undertakings," and that its rulers "were very loyal and devoted to the Commune."[2] And he presently adds: "The citizens of Florence lived soberly, on coarse viands and at little expense; their manners were very good; they had courteous ways; they were plain and frugal; and used rough stuff for their own and their women's dress. And many wore skins uncovered by cloth, and caps on their heads; all were shod with leather; and the Florentine women wore plain hose, and only the greater among them donned very narrow

[1] Villani and Ammirato, *ad annum.* [2] VI. 70.

petticoats of coarse scarlet Ipro or Camo cloth, gathered in at the waist by a leather belt in the old style,[1] and a fur-lined mantle with a hood attached to cover the head ;[2] and common women wore gowns of coarse green Cambragio stuff, made in the same fashion. And one hundred *lire* was the usual dowry for a bride, two or three hundred *lire* being considered in those times a splendid sum, and even the most beautiful maidens were not given in marriage until they were aged twenty years, or more."[3] Even the evidence of the "Divina Commedia" fully corroborates this account of the goodness and honesty of the Florentines of old, and events continued to prove the truth of the verdict.

Fortune favoured the city not only in war, but also in peace both within and without the walls. In addition to the many great public works we have already mentioned, and which were now completed, other buildings were in course of erection on various sites bought by the *anziani* for the purpose in different parts of the city. These officials, together with the captain of the people, Lambertino di Guido Lambertini, likewise decreed (1252–53) that the register of all the communal deeds should be re-copied and carried on regularly, in order, as they said, that the *jura et rationes Communis* might not be left unknown nor neglected, but open to the public in various places. These papers are the *capitoli* still preserved at the present time, and affording so much useful information on the history of Florence.[4]

Now, however, the state of affairs was about to take a fresh turn. In consequence of Conrad's decease, Manfred,

[1] *Scaggiale*—a leathern belt with a buckle.

[2] *Tassello*—a square of cloth attached to the cloak so as to be used as a hood.

[3] Villani, vi. 70.

[4] *Vide* "I Capitoli del Comune di Firenze, inventario e regesto," vol. i., edited by C. Guasti. Florence: Cellini, 1866.

the other son of Frederic II., succeeded to the Neapolitan throne. The new sovereign, being dauntless, ambitious, and full of talent, devoted all his powers to forwarding the interests of the Italian Ghibellines; and the Florentines, with their usual shrewdness, immediately became more cautious in their proceedings. In 1255 they made alliance with Sienna, the following year with Arezzo, severely blamed their captain, Count Guido Guerra, for expelling the Ghibellines from the latter city, and compelled him to recall them. They even treated their own exiles with greater indulgence and liberality, permitting some of them to return from time to time. But on either side these were false demonstrations, leading to no result. All were temporising, waiting to see what fresh turn the general affairs of Italy might take.

Supposing Manfred's fortunes to be really restored, the Florentines would suffer severely, and of this they were perfectly aware. A first warning was received by them in 1256, when the Pisans, oblivious of sworn terms and promises, made an attack upon Ponte a Serchio, a castle held by the Lucchese, the allies of Florence. Accordingly the Florentines hastened to their friends' relief, and routed the assailants, many of whom were drowned in the river in their flight. After this victory the troops marched towards Pisa and coined money in sight of the walls, an act then considered to inflict deep humiliation on the enemy. In addition to this the Pisans were not only forced to renew (September 23, 1256) the ignominious peace concluded in 1254, but also to cede many castles to the Florentines, and some few to the Lucchese.[1] And another clause was added to the terms stipulating that the Castle of Mutrone, a position of great strategical importance both to Lucchese and Florentines, should be given up to the latter, with power to destroy or preserve it, as

[1] Ammirato, *ad annum*, gives a summary of the treaty.

their magistrates might decide. Accordingly the question was discussed by a council of elders in Florence, and one of the number, Aldobrandino Ottobuoni, who, although poor and plebeian, had much influence as a patriot, asserted the necessity of demolishing the fortress. His proposal was carried, but with the proviso that it should be first submitted to the approval of the parliament. Meanwhile the Pisans, unaware of the result of the discussion and of Ottobuoni's amendment, but knowing that the castle, if held by the Lucchese, would be a serious menace to themselves, sent to offer Ottobuoni four thousand florins—in those days a prodigious sum—if he would address the council in favour of the very plan he had already pleaded with success. But this offer merely opened his eyes to the blunder he had committed, and returning to the council, he induced the elders to reverse their decision. Aldibrandino's reputation was so greatly enhanced by this affair, that on his death it was decreed that a monument should be erected to him in the Duomo of greater height than any other, and at the public expense.[1]

Many men were famed for their virtue in the time of the First Popular Government; but this government only lasted ten years, and a period of new reforms and revolutions, costing much travail to the Republic, is already near at hand.

[1] Villani, vi. 62. This incident, highly praised by Villani as a magnanimous example, has been quoted by others as a proof that the Florentine people must have been corrupt at a time when so exceptional a monument could be decreed to one of the citizens simply because he had refused to betray his country. But it should be noted, first of all, that he was not honoured with a monument merely because he had rejected a bribe, but, as Villani goes on to say, because "Aldobrandino died in such excellent repute for his virtuous deeds for the good of the Commune." Even should Villani's praises of the deed in itself seem too marked and consequently indicative of general corruption, this corruption might be more fitly attributed to Villani's own days than to the earlier period of Aldobrandino and the *Primo Popolo*, when genuine virtue and true patriotism were undoubtedly predominant.

VI.

The seeds of revolt were already lurking in the Constitution, and, as we have seen, only waiting a convenient opportunity to break forth. Nor was the moment long delayed. The Ghibelline party, after declining in consequence of Frederic's decease, was now revived in Italy by the strenuous efforts of Manfred in its cause. This monarch's envoys finally came to Florence in 1258, and naturally made their abode with the Uberti, whom they found quite prepared to try the hazard of war. These nobles quickly assembled their adherents, and formed a plot for the overthrow of the popular government. But the times were not yet ripe, because, as Machiavelli has justly remarked, "In those days the Guelphs had much more power than the Ghibellines, partly because the people hated the latter for their arrogant conduct as rulers in Frederic's time; and partly because the side of the Church was in greater favour than that of the emperor, seeing that with the aid of the Church they [the Florentines] "hoped to preserve their liberty, and feared to lose it under the emperor." [1] The conspiracy was soon discovered, in fact, and the Uberti were cited to appear before the elders. But, instead of obeying the summons, they barricaded themselves within their own dwellings by the advice of their chief, Farinata. Thereupon the enraged people flew to the assault; the houses of the Uberti were sacked; some of their friends captured, others killed, and no mercy shown even to those merely suspected of complicity. The Abbot of Vallombrosa, one of the Beccaria of Pavia, was beheaded, although his innocence was afterwards acknowledged by many.[2] The whole Uberti family and their principal followers had to seek safety in exile and fly to

[1] "Storie," lib. ii.

[2] Villani, vi. 65.

Sienna, the which city was the declared ally of Manfred, and the headquarters of all Tuscan Ghibellines. The exiles collected there chose Farinata, the most daring and influential member of the band, for their leader. Upon this the Florentines justly complained that the Siennese violated the treaty of 1255 by harbouring the fugitives; but Sienna, having been long the secret ally of the Ghibellines, was deaf to remonstrance.

Hence collision was inevitable, and Florence dealt the first blow by speedily attacking several castles and villages in the Siennese Maremma.[1] Then the *Martinella* was hung in the arch of the Mercato Nuovo, and repeatedly rang the alarm, announcing an expedition of far greater importance. Both sides began to prepare for war, and even summoned their friends to assemble. Florence had sent Brunetto Latini on an embassy to Alfonso of Castile, one of the aspirants to the Imperial crown, inviting him to march into Italy against Manfred. The Siennese, however, had already, and with greater hopes of success, applied for help, through the Florentine exiles, to Manfred in person. This monarch being much occupied with his own kingdom at the time, despatched Giordano d'Anglona, Count of San Severino, with about one hundred German knights, who reached Sienna in December, 1259, bearing the royal banner. At last, in April, 1260, the Florentines set forth with the *carroccio*, people and Commune in full array, with the *Podestà Iacopino Rangoni*, the elders and leaders of companies at their head, and encamped close to the walls of Sienna, near Porta Camollia. On the 17th of May a battle took place on the site of the monastery of Santa

[1] C. Paoli, "La battagali di Montaperti" (extract from vol. ii. of the "Bollettino della Società Senese di Storia patria"). Sienna, 1869. In 1889 Prof. Paolo added another very important publication to this work, *i.e.*, "Il libro di Montaperti," in the "Documenti di Storia Italiana," brought out by the Royal Commission for Tuscany, Umbria, and the Marches, vol. ix.

Petronilla. It is related that when Farinata degli Uberti, who, as chief of the exiles, had done much to promote the war, saw how small a contingent Manfred had sent with the standard, he exclaimed : "We will lead it into such straits, that he [the king] will fain be the enemy of the Florentines, and will give us more [knights] than we shall want." [1] It is also told that the German soldiers were purposely intoxicated to make them fight with blind fury.[2] What is certain is that the Siennese citizens marched out under the command of their Podestà, and that the Germans, jointly with the exiles, of whom Farinata was still the chief, were led by Count Guido Novello. The Germans began the engagement with so furious an onslaught that the Florentines, believing a formidable army was on them, scattered in dismay ; but then, perceiving the hostile force to be inferior to their own, stood their ground valiantly, and after a sanguinary mêlée repulsed the foe, and capturing Manfred's flag, dragged it in the mud. There was much rejoicing in Florence, although the victory had been dearly bought, and it was seen that a small band of well-trained German cavalry had put to the rout, at least for a moment, a large army of peasants and artisans. The Siennese derived courage from the same fact, particularly now that their chief citizen, Provenzano Salvani, and other ambassadors, were returning from Naples with a stout contingent of eight hundred [3] Germans, also under the command of Count Giordano, now promoted to the post of vicar-royal to Manfred in Tuscany.

Accordingly the war had to be pursued ; for with the Siennese already in the field to subdue Staggia and Poggi-

[1] Marchionni di Coppo Stefani, "Stor. fior.," rubric 120.
[2] Villani and other Florentine chroniclers.
[3] The figures given by Florentine chroniclers are never exact, and must be therefore regarded as approximate ones only.

bonsi, and devastate Colle, Montalcino, and Montepulciano, the Florentines were compelled to resume hostilities. Farinata degli Uberti and his fellow-exiles continually cast fresh fuel on the flame by using every device of ingenuity to provoke their foes, and weave treasonable plots within the walls of Florence. In fact, two friars were sent there to inform the elders, with great affectation of secresy, that Sienna was weary of the Ghibellines and of Provenzano Salvani's domination, that accordingly it would be easy to have the gates opened to the Florentine army by means of a bribe of ten thousand florins. The friars, being deceived themselves, as it appears, had no difficulty in duping others. According to Villani's account, on arriving in the city, they asked leave to confer with two elders alone, under pledge of the strictest secresy. Two members were deputed to receive their proposals, who, believing the men to come from the exiles, sons of their own Republic, and forgetting how they had always been dominated by party hatred, accepted the false message in good faith. Although great mystery was observed in the affair, yet it was necessary to consult the citizens before deciding on war. For that purpose a numerous council of nobles and *popolani* was assembled, and the elders, under more or less plausible pretexts, urged the necessity of quickly resuming the war against Sienna. Nevertheless, there was much disagreement. Although the Florentine laws opposed every possible check to general discussion, and especially when directed against any proposal brought forward by a magistrate,[1]

[1] Here is an instance extracted from a law of 1284: "Item quod nullus presumat consulere, vel arengare super aliquo quod non sit principaliter propositum per dominum Potestatem, vel aliquem loco sui. Et qui contrafacerit, in soldos sexaginta florenorum parvorum vice qualibet puniatur, et plus et minus ad voluntatem domini Potestatis. Et quicquid dictum vel consultum contra propositionem, non valeat, nec teneat." "Consigli Maggiori, Provvisioni e Registri," i., sheets 12 *retro*. Archivio di Stato, Florence.

the import of this question was seen to be so grave, that several speakers combated it, pointing out the enormous folly of plunging into war at this moment, when it was known that Sienna had no means of maintaining the Germans for long. The nobles were specially adverse to the proposal, for they had recognised the superiority of the German cavalry, and judged that no army composed of artisans and traders, little practised in war, could possibly make a stand against it, especially now that it was in much greater force. Also, seeing what progress had been already made in the art of war, battles could no more be won by deeds of personal prowess alone. Unluckily the opposition of the nobles inflamed the people in the contrary sense, and set them shouting that they must arm and march forth without delay. Tegghiaio Aldobrandi degli Adimari was one of the first patricians to speak against the proposal and in favour of delay. But an elder named Spedito, and, according to Villani, one of the two sharing the secret, replied to him in insulting terms, winding up with a coarse sneer at Adimari's supposed cowardice.[1] Whereupon Messer Tegghiaio retorted, exclaiming that Spedito would lack the courage to follow far at his heels in battle. After this squabble Cece Gherardini rose up and openly inveighed against the war proposed by the elders. The latter then insisted on his silence, in the name of the law, threatening to make him pay the fine of one hundred *lire* imposed by the statutes on all venturing to speak without the permission of the magistrates; but Gherardini replied that he would pay it and speak. Accordingly they increased the fine to two hundred, then to three hundred *lire*, but only succeeded in silencing him by threats of capital punishment.[2] So the motion for war was finally carried, although even with-

[1] Too coarse to be translated.—*Translator's note.*
[2] Villani, vi. 78.

out the secret intrigues retailed and exaggerated by the chroniclers, the heated state of public feeling made hostilities unavoidable.

The Florentine army was still commanded in 1260 by the same Podestà who had led it to battle the previous May. But it was now reinforced by all the Guelphs of Tuscany, from Perugia, Orvieto, Bölogna, and many other cities, so that its total strength amounted to thirty thousand foot and three thousand horse. This large force marched forth in the month of August, with all its chiefs, with the *Carroccio*, and a well-furnished baggage train, crossed the Siennese border, and reaching Pieve Asciata on September 2nd, halted there to rest. The intrigues carried on by the exiles had produced two results; for on the one hand they had inspired Florence with the vain hope that Sienna could be gained without bloodshed, merely by spending money and making a great show of strength; on the other hand there were traitors in the army itself, actually pledged to secret agreements with the enemy. The first measure adopted was to send messengers to the city haughtily demanding its surrender. But when these envoys entered Sienna they found the whole population burning for war and revenge. They were solemnly received by the Council of Twenty-four, the heads of the State; and these, on hearing their demands, made reply: "*That they should have an answer, by word of mouth, in the field.*" Hence the only thing to do was to prepare for a decisive engagement.

On the morning of the 3rd of September a herald went through the streets of Sienna calling on all men to hasten to join his own flag, "in the name of God and the Virgin Mary."[1] Thus a considerable army was collected and marched the same day to encounter the Florentines.

[1] Aldobrandini, "Chroniche," p. 9; Paoli, "La battaglia di Montaperti," p. 46.

The details supplied by the chroniclers are so discrepant that it is difficult to decide as to the exact strength of the force. The Germans, the exiled Ghibellines of Florence, and several contingents from allies swelled the Siennese ranks. Nevertheless the total number was certainly inferior to that of the enemy. According to custom, the Podestà, Francesco Troghisio, held the post of Commander-in-chief. But the actual leaders of the army were Count Giordano and Count D'Arras in command of the German horse and foot; Count Aldobrandino of Santa Fiora, and other valiant captains. The Florentine exiles, including Farinata degli Uberti, who was excited to the highest pitch, were under the command of Count Guido Novello. The army of Florence was also led by its Podestà, Jacopo Rangoni; but its captains were untrained men, who still clung to the hope of winning the victory without striking a blow. They advanced with the *Carroccio* as far as Monselvoli in Val di Biena, and encamped at a short distance from the Arbia stream and the fortress of Montaperti, some four miles from Sienna. On the morning of the 4th of September the Siennese, and more especially the Germans, began the battle by a tremendous onslaught. The Count of Arras kept his men in ambush in order to fall on the enemy's flank at the best moment. Until the hour of vespers, the Florentines made a steadfast resistance, but then began to show signs of failing strength. Thereupon Arras led up his reserve with cries of "St. George," and attacked them so furiously in flank that they were speedily routed. At the same moment Bocca degli Abati, one of the Florentine traitors, severed at a blow the hand of Jacopo dei Pazzi, the standard-bearer of the cavalry. As the flag fell the troop, composed almost entirely of nobles, instantly took to flight, some from panic, others with treasonable intent. But the infantry, consisting of stout

popolani and faithful allies, stood its ground for a time; then wavered, gave way, and was involved in the general rout. Only the guards of the *Carroccio*, commanded by Giovanni Tornaquinci, a veteran of seventy years, who fought like a lion, maintained their position until the last man fell dead defending the banner. Then, finally, the *Carroccio*, the *Martinella*, and the flag of the Republic were captured by the foe, who bore their spoil to Sienna in triumph and reduced it to atoms.[1] Great slaughter took place, and although many Florentines sought safety in the castle of Montaperti, crying, "Mercy, I surrender!" no mercy was shown them. Finally the Siennese captain, Count Giordano, by the advice of Farinata degli Uberti and with the consent of the gonfaloniers of the people, gave orders that the slaughter should be stopped, and safety granted to all who surrendered.[2] It is difficult to decide how many were killed on that fatal day. Villani, keeping to the minimum, states that all the cavalry escaped by flight, the slaughter being confined to the infantry, of whom 2,500 were killed and 1,500 captured. The Siennese, reducing their own losses to 600 killed and 400 wounded, estimate those of the Florentines at 10,000 killed, 15,000 taken prisoner, 5,000 wounded, and 18,000 horses either killed or strayed. These figures may be exaggerated, but Villani's are certainly below the real number.[3] Nevertheless, the chronicler shows the true state of things when he says in conclusion, "and then the ancient Florentine people was put to rout and annihilated."[4] This, in fact, was the ultimate result of the

[1] In the cathedral of Sienna certain poles are shown traditionally believed to have belonged to the Florentine *Carroccio*. But Siennese scholars now justly maintain that these poles formed part of their own *Carroccio* instead.

[2] Paoli, op. cit., p. 58.

[3] Sismondi, after comparison of the chroniclers' accounts, raises the number of killed to 10,000 and the wounded to the same figure.

[4] VI. 19.

battle "*that stained the Arbia red*" ("*che fece l'Arbia colorata in rosso*").

Sienna triumphed with great rejoicing, great festivities; but there was a terrible outcry and lamentation in Florence, where no family had escaped loss. The leading Guelphs knew that their last chance of safety had vanished, and therefore many of their noble families fled into exile together with a considerable number of *popolani*. They escaped from the city on the 13th of September, and although a few of them were scattered among the Tuscan castles, the majority repaired to Lucca, this being still the chief centre of the Guelph faction.

On the 16th of September Count Giordano entered Florence with his German troops, accompanied by the Ghibelline exiles laden with spoil and ready to play the conquerors. One of their first deeds was the destruction of the Ottobuoni monument in the Duomo, forgetful that whether Guelph or Ghibelline that virtuous citizen deserved honour as a patriot. Thus, from the beginning, the Ghibellines did their best to make themselves more detested and unbearable. Poggibonsi, Montalcino, and many of the castles which had cost so much strife, were given up to Sienna. The "ordinances of liberty" were annulled, and Count Giordano nominated Count Guido Novello Podestà of Florence for two years.[1] The latter immediately took possession of the Communal palace, and opened a road thence to the city walls, with the name it still bears of Via Ghibellina. Meanwhile sentences of banishment and persecution of all sorts befel the Guelphs. Their houses and towers were demolished, and their confiscated property devoted to the service of the Ghibelline cause, which was everywhere destined to triumph.

[1] Lord of the Castle of Poppi in the Casentino. He had separated from the other Counts Guidi, who were Guelphs.

Brunetto Latini was also condemned to exile. As we have seen, he had been an ambassador to Alphonso of Castile, and was now in France, where he wrote the "Tesoro," containing an account of his mission.

Count Giordano, being recalled to Naples by Manfred, soon took his departure, leaving Guido Novello to replace him. Thereupon all the Ghibelline chiefs met in council at Empoli to arrange what was to be done. As an instance of the pitch of ferocity to which party hatred against Florence had attained, it was proposed at this meeting to demolish the city walls, pull down all the houses, and reduce this "nest of Guelphs" to a mere suburb, since otherwise they would be sure to revive there once more. But Farinata degli Uberti had the generosity to oppose the suggestion, and in the impulse of his wrath clapped his hand on his sword-hilt, and declared to Count Giordano and the other captains that he had fought to regain his country, not to lose it, and would defend it against all would-be destroyers even more zealously than he had fought against the Guelphs.[1] These words caused the wild proposal to be instantly rejected.

Count Guido appointed several Ghibelline Podestà in Tuscany, while retaining the general government of that province in his own grasp, and likewise ruling Florence as vicar to King Manfred. He basely allowed himself to be the tool of Ghibelline vengeance, although his uncertainty of conduct and weakness of character did little service to the party. Nevertheless, the Guelphs continued to suffer persecution, not only in Florence, where confiscation of their property and destruction of their dwellings

[1] All this is narrated by Villani and other chroniclers, and is likewise recorded by Dante in the "Divina Commedia." A few writers have tried to throw doubt on the incident, but, as Dr. Hartwig justly observes, it is difficult to suppose that Guelph chroniclers would have invented a legend so entirely favourable to the Ghibelline chief.

and towers were long the order of the day,[1] but also in the neighbouring castles and at Lucca, whence all fugitive Guelphs were expelled. It was on this occasion that Farinata degli Uberti, having seized Cece dei Buondelmonti, hoisted him on his saddle and carried him off, either to save his life, as some have said, or, according to another version, as prisoner of war. But his brother Pietro degli Uberti was so maddened at the sight, that he clubbed the captive to death on Farinata's horse. Such was the ferocity of party hatred at the time. After the defeat of 1260 many Guelphs wandered homeless about the world. Some devoted their swords to the service of their faction in Emilia, and became experts in the newest developments of military science; while others settled in France as traders, thus giving a fresh and much increased impulse to Florentine commerce.

VII.

From the close of 1260, the year of the battle of Montaperti, down to 1266, when the rule of Count Guido and King Manfred came to an end, the history of Florence records no remarkable event. The city's freedom is crushed, its wars reduced to petty and inglorious party strife, and its new institutions, if worthy to be so called, have no effect on the historical development of the Florentine constitution. In trying to discover the logical connection between the various forms assumed by it in the history of the Republic, no attention need be given to the checks suffered by freedom nor to the intervals wherein tyranny breaks the regular course of events and institu-

[1] Prof. Del Lungo gives a full account of these demolitions in his paper, "Una vendetta in Firenze," in the "Arch. Stor. It.," Series iv. vol. 18, p. 355 and fol.

tions, seeing that these resume their normal march as soon as liberty is restored to life.

The Podestà ruling in Manfred's name retained the two councils, *i.e.*, the general council of three hundred, and the special of ninety members, in both of which the nobles and the Ghibellines naturally prevailed. But we hear nothing more of the Captain of the people and his councils, nor of the elders and their assembly. But we find in their place a body of twenty-four citizens, four to each *sestiere*, privileged to sit in council with the Podestà.[1] Of the ancient Constitution a few fragments alone remain, and even these are ancient only in name. As a matter of fact the Ghibellines had succeeded, with Manfred's assistance, in establishing an aristocratic despotism, as strangely different from the constitution preceding it as from that destined to replace it, these being in perfect harmony and connection one with the other.

Meanwhile the war against the Guelphs was carried on, not only by razing their houses and confiscating their goods, but by the imposition of repeated fines weighing heavily on the lower classes who were now deprived of all share in the government. But in 1264 Farinata degli Uberti died, in 1265 Dante Alighieri was born, and Italy began to be stirred by novel events soon to be echoed even in Florence.

For some time past, in truth, Italian politics had showed signs of approaching to a radical change. Frederic II., although often cruelly despotic, had gathered about him, nevertheless, all the most cultured men of the country and was highly popular among them. His successor, Manfred, was an adventurous and unfortunate prince, whose loftiness of spirit deservedly gained him numerous admirers. It is true that the Papacy had combated both

[1] P. Ildefonso, "Delizie," &c., vol. ix. p. 19 and fol.

in their quality of Ghibellines; but the policy of Rome was gradually becoming no less hostile to communal freedom than to the Ghibelline cause, inasmuch as the Papal ambition daily increased and sought to strengthen the temporal power at the expense of the communes. Florence still remained Guelph; but with changed times the character and value, if not the names of parties were beginning to suffer alteration throughout Italy. Hence men often changed sides with small hesitation, nor was it always easy to say whether those who deserted their own party had changed, or whether the alteration of the party itself had caused it to be forsaken. Also the general confusion was greatly increased now that the Popes, with their usual anxiety and dread of losing their supremacy in Italy, resolved on calling fresh strangers to their aid and thus drew fresh miseries on the land.

Alarmed by the great power and reputation gained by the Swabian line, they sought defence in the course of policy so well described by Machiavelli when he remarks that the Popes, "sometimes for the love of religion, at others to forward their own ambitions, never ceased to call fresh humours into Italy and stir fresh wars. And no sooner had they raised a prince to power than they repented and sought to compass his ruin, nor would they consent that any province their own weakness prevented them from seizing should be possessed by another."[1] Thus, after many persistent intrigues, they finally decided the Angevins to undertake an expedition against Manfred, and for the conquest of the Neapolitan kingdom.

With the aid and benediction of Pope Clement IV., Charles of Anjou brought an army composed not only of his own subjects, but of many Italians, among whom the exiled Florentine Guelphs were some of the most

[1] Machiavelli, "Storie," lib. i. p. 37.

distinguished for bravery.[1] He advanced to the Neapolitan frontier, and near Benevento, on February 26, 1266, gave battle to the foe. King Manfred fought valiantly, and when forsaken and betrayed by his soldiery, died the death of a hero on the field. For three days, vain search was made for his corpse among the slain, then it was found, and carried off on the back of an ass. The French monarch refused Manfred burial in consecrated ground, because the Pope had declared him excommunicate. Accordingly he was laid in a ditch by the bridge of Benevento, where the French soldiers, casting each a stone on the corpse, raised a pile that proved a fitting monument to the courage and ill fortune of a warrior slain sword in hand. But Pope Clement grudged him even this humble grave, and at his command the Archbishop of Cosenza persuaded the Angevin monarch to have the corpse exhumed, and thrown beyond the frontier of the Neapolitan kingdom, on the banks of the river Verde.[2] All these events completed the overthrow of the Ghibelline party in Italy. The Imperial throne stood vacant, the Suabians

[1] It is said that Manfred, on witnessing their attack, showed his admiration for their courage by exclaiming, "Whoever may win the victory, these Guelphs will not lose it."

[2] Dante (Purgatorio, iii. 121–32). The poet places Manfred in purgatory, although at the period he was classed as a heretic together with the Emperor Frederic, Farinata, and many other Ghibellines:

"Orribili furon li peccati miei,
Ma la bontà infinita ha si gran braccia
Che prende ciò che si rivolve a lei.
Se il pastor di Cosenza, che alla caccia
Di me fu messo per Clemente, allora
Avesse in Dio ben letta questa faccia,
L'ossa del corpo mio sarieno ancora
In co' del ponte presso a Benevento,
Sotto la guardia della grave mora.
Or le bagna la pioggia e move il vento,
Di fuor del Regno, quasi lungo il Verde,
Ove le trasmutò a lume spento.

were crushed, and another foreign dynasty succeeded them in Naples, summoned thither by the Pope. If Frederic's decease had caused the decline of the Ghibellines in Florence, it is easy to imagine what was to befal them now that their evil sway had accumulated such increased detestation of their rule, and that the death of Manfred not only deprived them of a friendly sovereign, but extinguished in Italy the domination of an Imperial and royal line that had been their strongest support.

In fact, when the result of the campaign was announced in Florence, the whole population was moved and stirred to fresh courage against the nobles still holding rule over them. And when it was known that the majority of the Florentine Guelphs, who had done such brave service in the ranks of King Charles, were returning to Florence under his flag, the populace seemed so ready to revolt that Count Guido and his followers were stricken with fear. Therefore, as Machiavelli says, "the Ghibellines judged it well to conciliate by some acts of beneficence the people they had hitherto overwhelmed with injuries; but although these remedies would have succeeded had they been applied before the emergency arose, now, on the contrary, being used too late, not only failed of effect, but hastened the party's ruin." [1] In fact, when Count Guido and the Ghibelline leaders sought to pacify the people by certain liberal concessions they knew not where to begin. The old laws had been annulled, and these men had so completely alienated the people by their arbitrary government and exactions, that no concession could now be made without yielding on all points. On the other hand, the people, being excluded from all share in the management of the State, had turned to trade and commerce, employing therein all the power and energy they were forbidden to

[1] Machiavelli, "Storie," lib. ii. p. 73.

bring to bear upon politics. Accordingly all branches of trade were marvellously developed and organised more firmly than before in the shape of politico-industrial associations, entitled Greater and Lesser Guilds (*Arti maggiori ed Arti minori*), the which, dating from the earliest years of the Middle Ages, had gradually become significant political forces, and exercised very great civic influence. Thus many new powerful families had arisen, constituting a new aristocracy, as it were, of wealthy traders, or, according to the designation already bestowed on them, of *popolani grassi* (stout burghers) now the virtual masters of the Florentine citizens.[1] Gradually, therefore, the Ghibellines in power were reduced to an isolated caste, and only enabled to maintain their position by Manfred's friendly support and the help of his German contingent. Being accordingly in the attitude of invaders encamped on alien soil, their moral and political ascendency, their civil authority daily declined; while the burghers under their rule had won by means of trade and commerce a separate world for themselves and constituted a separate body, independent to some extent of the governing authorities. It was both difficult and dangerous to seek the help of the leading burghers, for these, being chiefs of the Guelph population, would undoubtedly insist on giving the latter a share in the government, the which would lead to the speedy downfall of the nobles and Ghibellines. Neither was it

[1] This result had come to pass at a much earlier period, was of frequent occurrence in Florentine history, and was now more assured than at any previous time. Malespini's Chronicle, chap. 104, even before the coronation of Frederic II., refers to certain families who "were beginning to be prominent, although too obscure to be mentioned a short while ago. . . . The Mozzi, Bardi, Jacopi detti Rossi, Frescobaldi, all these were of recent creation, inasmuch as they were still merchants and of petty origin: likewise the Tornaquinci and Cavalcanti, also traders, were of petty origin, and the same may be said of the Cerchi, who shortly began to rise higher than the aforesaid."

easy for the nobles to initiate partial reforms, since they neither knew what concessions to make, nor how to grant any at a moment when the people were conscious of sufficient strength to dominate the city. It was accordingly decided to summon from Bologna two knights of a new order known as the *Frati Gaudenti*, whose mission it was to succour widows and orphans and reconcile hostile parties. Also, as a visible sign of impartiality, one of the chosen knights was to be a Guelph, the other a Ghibelline. All this was arranged with the consent and almost at the instance of Pope Clement IV., who, being of Provençal birth and a strenuous supporter of Charles of Anjou, continually addressed imperious missives to the Florentines,[1] as though the Imperial throne being vacant, its authority had devolved upon himself, and the victory gained by King Charles had made him master of Florence.

But, according to Villani's account, the short-lived order of Frati Gaudenti consisted of men chiefly devoted to their own pleasures, and little fitted for the serious task of acting as Podestà of Florence, and promoting novel reforms there. This was so evident that the two knights speedily saw the necessity of consulting and coming to an understanding with the guilds. Therefore, on reaching the city, they made their abode in the palace of the Commune, and convoked a council of thirty-six Guelph and Ghibelline merchants. The members soon began to hold daily discussions in their meeting-place, the court of the Calimala, or Clothdressers' Guild. The business of dressing foreign woollen stuffs had made great progress in Florence, and the guild was more powerful than any of the others. The council soon agreed that

[1] Most of these letters are given in Martène, others are published by Del Giudice in his "Codice diplomatico di Carlo I. and Carlo II. d'Angiò."

the first measure proposed should be the conversion of the seven greater guilds into an industrial and political body, with special banners, weapons, and chiefs of its own. So they began to organise all the details, assigning a gonfalon to each guild, and arranging them as follows : Judges and Notaries ; Calimala, or Dressers of Foreign Cloth ; Woollen Trade ; Money-changers ; Physicians and Druggists ; Silk Trade, and Fur Trade. The Ghibellines, however, foresaw that this course would inevitably lead to the reconstruction of the *Primo Popolo* under another name. Accordingly the Uberti, Lamberti, Fifanti, and Scolari decidedly opposed these innovations, and impressed Count Guido with the necessity of putting a stop to them at once if he wished to keep the government in his grasp. This being precisely what the count most desired, he instantly sent to demand aid from Ghibelline cities. Arezzo, Sienna Pisa, Pistoia, Colle, and San Gimignano contributed some cavalry, which, with his German guard, raised his forces to fifteen hundred. But, although these troops were under Count Guido's command, they were also at his expense ; his Germans were already clamouring for their pay, and all his money was spent. Accordingly, while still negotiating terms of agreement with the people, he decided to levy an additional income tax of ten per cent. in Florence. But the citizens were already so heavily burdened that this new impost was more than small fortunes could support. The people were already weary of misgovernment, and much irritated by the count's action in stripping the Communal palace of its armoury to enrich his own castle at Poppi ; also being encouraged by commercial success and increasingly hostile to the Ghibellines, they now made vigorous protest, and clearly showed their readiness to fly to arms. Then the Council of Thirty-six tried to pacify the citizens, and acting as mediators, proposed to undertake the collection

of the new tax, levying it in such wise as to make it fall chiefly on the rich and powerful.

Just then, however, the nobles, emboldened by the arrival of reinforcements, thought the moment had arrived for a decisive blow, and rose to arms in the city. The Lamberti took the initiative by rushing to the Piazza, sword in hand, shouting, "Out with these thieves, the Thirty-six; let us cut them to pieces!" At this outcry all shops were closed; the Thirty-six broke up their council, and the people rising in revolt took their orders from them and from the consuls of the guilds, with Giovanni Soldanieri as their leader-in-chief. The latter was a patrician, urged by personal ambition to join the riot at the head of the people. Concentrating in Piazza St. Trinità, they were soon attacked by Count Guido and his cavalry, who thought to make short work of them. But, on the contrary, the crowd threw up barricades and made a stubborn resistance, while such a storm of stones and darts rained down from windows and roofs that the Germans began to lose heart, and the count, stricken with dismay, ordered his standards to withdraw, retreated to Piazza St. Giovanni, and then hurrying to the two *Gaudenti* in the Communal palace, demanded the keys of the town in order to effect his escape. Neither his friends' supplications nor the wrath of his followers could persuade him that the danger was not serious, and that he might safely remain in the town. He was so bewildered by fear that, having obtained the keys, he insisted on being escorted by three of the Thirty-six, lest he should be shot from some window by the way. So, on St. Martin's Day, November 11, 1266, he left Florence by the so-called Gate of the Oxen, and fled with his followers to Prato.

The following day, being cured of his panic, he perceived his mistake, and by the advice of the Florentine

Ghibellines in his company tried, as Machiavelli puts it, "to recapture by force the city he had forsaken from cowardice." [1] He came with his men in order of battle as far as the Gate by the Carraia Bridge, on the site of the present Borgo Ognissanti; but the people who could have scarcely succeeded in expelling him before, save for his own exaggerated fears, had no difficulty in repulsing him now. When the count demanded admission with a mixture of threats and entreaties, the only reply was a shower of arrows from the walls. He was therefore compelled to retreat, and his men were so enraged and humiliated that on the way back they tried to capture a neighbouring castle in order to prove their strength. But even this small attempt failed, and they reached Prato more humbled than ever, and with much dissension in their ranks. The count, convinced of the hopelessness of recovering the state, sought refuge in the Casentino, and the Florentine Ghibellines dispersed to various fortresses and mansions about the *contado*.

VIII.

The Guelphs were now masters of Florence. They set to work at the changes required for the reorganisation of the popular government, and were favoured with much imperious advice from the Pope. However, they only gave heed to his epistles in sufficient measure to avoid exciting his wrath. Their first act was the dismissal of the two *Gaudenti* friars, whose incapacity had been well proved; their next to request Orvieto to furnish them with a Captain of the people, a Podestà, and a body of knights to guard the safety of the Commune. Accordingly one hundred knights arrived, with Messer Ormanno Monal-

[1] Machiavelli, "Storie," lib. ii. p. 75.

deschi as Podestà, and a Messer Bernardini as Captain. For the sake of peace they allowed the Ghibellines to return to Florence, and arranged various reconciliations and marriages between them and the Guelphs, hoping thus to promote unity among the people and mitigate party hatred. But, in the still heated state of the public mind, these measures only excited fresh rancour.

At this juncture Florence seemed to have lost all her former self-reliance, so that, in the midst of the grave complications of Italian politics, even the Guelphs felt the need of foreign support. It was a fatal habit, first owed to the Ghibellines, who, in token of respect toward the Empire, had requested the presence of an Imperial vicar in Florence. So, now that the people had won the victory because the Angevins had succeeded the Suabian line on the Neapolitan throne, recurrence to the same perilous measure seemed almost unavoidable. The Pope, with an assumption of Imperial prerogative, had nominated Charles of Anjou, first as peacemaker, and then as actual vicar-imperial, in Tuscany, for a term of ten years. The Florentines considering it a duty to conform with this new state of things, and even to accept it with a good grace, accordingly offered Charles the lordship of their city for six years, a term afterwards extended to ten. But either because the conditions attached to the offer were distasteful to the French monarch, or because he wished it to be pressed more energetically, he certainly showed much hesitation in deciding to accept it. Shortly afterwards he despatched to Florence Philip de Monfort, who made his entry with eight hundred knights on Easter Day, 1267, the anniversary, as it was remarked at the time, of Buondelmonti's assassination. The king subsequently sent Guy de Monfort as his vicar;[1] and at last

[1] "Il Codice diplomatico di Carlo I. e II. d'Angiò," published by Del Giudice, in Naples, serves to rectify many blunders made by the chroniclers on this point.

came in person to lead the war against the Ghibellines in Tuscany.

The Ghibellines being now expelled, and the supremacy of Charles accepted as an accomplished fact, the necessity remained of establishing the government of Florence on a definite basis, and endeavouring to secure its freedom amid new and hazardous complications. To this end the fourth constitution of the Republic was evolved. The state of Florentine society had undergone considerable change, and this implied a corresponding change in the character of the new constitution. The Ghibelline or patrician party was now reduced to a small number of nobles, soldiers by profession, and eager to exercise tyranny. But, as we have seen, almost a new aristocracy had come to the front, composed of nobles, who, renouncing their titles and altering their names, had joined the popular side, and likewise of well-to-do burghers (*popolo grasso*), who, having leapt to fortune as traders, had now entered a new sphere of civil life, and dominated the city.[1] Another point to be noted is that both burghers and populace were rapidly losing their aptitude for arms, and this not merely because in all wars of the period the superiority of trained soldiers was a recognised fact, and popular armies seen to be of small use, but also because commerce had become too important for busy traders, engaged in their shops or travelling about the world, to be able, as in past times, to spend two or three months of the year in the field. Commerce was now the chief occupation and almost the very life of the Florentines, so that they really deserved to be called a people of bankers and merchants.

In addition to all this there was now a foreign power

[1] "The citizens of ancient times being either entirely extinguished, or, at least decayed by age, another race began to spring up, as it were, in a new city." Ammirato, "Storie."

upheld by foreign soldiery in Florence. Whether in person or by means of other officials of his own nomination, Charles of Anjou filled the post of Podestà of the city, and even the Captain of the people was often a man of his choice. Therefore, with their usual sagacity, the Florentines re-established the twelve elders, two for each *sestiere*, under the name of the Twelve Worthies, as advisers to the Podestà. Also, in place of the Thirty-six, they constituted a council of one hundred worthies of the people, "without whose sanction no important measure nor any expenditure was to be undertaken." With this council and with the parliament, which legally, at all events, never ceased to exist in Florence, we see the reconstitution of a central and popular government, limiting the authority of the Angevin Podestà.

It was, indeed, almost a revival of the old consular government by which the Podestà and Captain, now to be made subordinate to it, had been originally raised to power. Nor did matters stop at this point. The two councils, special and general, of the Podestà and Captain were likewise repristinated. With this difference, however, that whereas by the constitution of 1250 the Captain of the people had been second in command, and then almost abolished under the Ghibelline sway, now at this date he not only resumed his functions, but was given precedence over the Podestà.

In fact, any Bill proposed by the Twelve to the Hundred and approved by the latter, was passed on to the Captain's two councils, in the first place to his special council of the *capitudini*—also known as the *credenza*—consisting, as formerly, of eighty members. Approved by this assembly, the Bill was then proposed to the council general and special and of the *capitudini*, comprising three hundred members. As a rule, all the three councils put it to the vote the same day. Then, on the following day, the Bill was presented

to both the councils of the Podestà, first to the special council of ninety, next to the general council of three hundred, sometimes increased to 390 by deliberating jointly with the special assembly. We know very little regarding the mode of election to these councils, but they usually lasted six months. Nevertheless, as they were very large and, on the other hand, the number of the citizens was small, we opine that all eligible persons—*abili a sedere*, namely, fully qualified citizens—must have been chosen in turn. It should also be added that projected motions were neither all nor invariably submitted to every one of these different councils. Both by law and usage the magistrates were often privileged to recur to certain councils only, even as they were allowed the right of assembling a preliminary and more restricted council of *richiesti* (or invited persons), composed solely of officials or citizens whose experience might be useful in drawing up the required schemes. At other times even a few outsiders were invited to the councils. Thus, for instance, when affairs of war were under discussion the presence was requested of those charged to superintend them. The statutes were neither very precise nor very stringent on this point. Special efforts, however, seem to have been used to put checks on free discussion, possibly to prevent the multitude of councils from causing undue delay. The right of proposing any measure or decree was strictly reserved to magistrates, by whom some notary or other qualified person was commissioned to support it in their name. Save in very grave cases, the councillors only said a few words before voting. The opposition was never more than a small minority, partly because every project brought before the councils had been already sifted several times. Later on, while still allowing men to vote against the magisterial proposals, no one was permitted to speak save in their favour. Hence, in spite of possessing

so many public assemblies, Italy produced no real political oratory, and in fact our literature is very poor in this branch of eloquence. And another point should also be noted here. The Council of One Hundred was entirely plebeian, so too those of the Captain; on the other hand, nobles, as well as plebeians, sat in the Podestà's councils. The *capitudini*, or guild-masters, were always admitted, as we have shown, to the Captain's councils, and very frequently also to those of the Podestà. All this plainly proves that the democratic party and the greater guilds constituting its main nucleus were decidedly predominant.[1] Thus, although King Charles obtained the lord-

[1] There are so many discrepancies among Florentine authorities regarding this question that, after careful study and comparison of the different accounts given by the chroniclers, we have chosen Villani as our guide. He is the most celebrated of the old writers and the nearest to the times described. On close consideration of his words (*vide* Villani, lib. vii. chap. xvi.) we see that the councils are to be specified as those of the Twelve, of the Captain and of the Podestà. But reference to the State Archives, the *Consulte*, or first volume of *Provvisioni*—dated a few years after the reform of which we speak—will serve to prove that sometimes the Council of One Hundred was assembled; at others both the special council of the Captain and his council-general and special were summoned; sometimes again the Podestà's special council—likewise styled the Council of Ninety—with his council-general and special, amounting in all to 390 members (300 + 90). We also find that admittance to these four last-mentioned councils was usually granted to the seven masters (*capitudini*) of the greater guilds, and that in course of time the number of the masters increased, and that they were sometimes summoned to meet as a separate council. By studying the number of votes given at the councils, we find sufficient proof of the accuracy of Villani's statements. In special councils the voting was done with black and white balls, a record being kept of their respective numbers. But at that period general councils only signified their verdict by standing up or remaining seated, and the votes were not recorded in writing. But regarding these points the rules changed as circumstances required, for the magistrates were frequently authorised to consult *whichever councils they preferred*.

In affairs of the highest importance, and in discussions carried on in a strictly legal way, every measure proposed had to be first approved by the twelve worthies, who were likewise allowed to ask the advice of confidential private persons, afterwards denominated *advisers* (*richiesti*). The proposal was next submitted to the One Hundred, then to the Captain's two councils, and finally to those of the Podestà. All these

ship of Florence, his power was fettered by so many restrictions that all administrative authority remained vested in the people, and particularly in the well-to-do burgher class (*popolo grasso*).

The new laws examined by us now contain allusions to Guelphs and Ghibellines, many to nobles and people (*grandi* and *popolani*); for party conflict was beginning to wear its real name, and plainly signified the struggle between the aristocracy and democracy. Nevertheless, the Ghibelline faction still survived and constituted in fact the aristocratic party. For this reason the people desired its total destruction, and another clause of the new constitution aimed at the same result. A list was drawn up of all who had suffered persecution from the Ghibellines between 1260 and 1266, together with an inventory of their confiscated property. The number of victims was found to be very great, and their losses to amount to the then enormous sum of 132,160,8,4 *lire*.[1] It was

details are confirmed by the documents in the Archives; and as a more easily verified instance, although of later date than the period now described, we may quote the opening sentence of the "Statuto dell' Esecutore di Giustizia," given in the Appendix to Signor Giudici's "Storia de' Municipi Italiani," p. 402 (1st edition). "In the name of God, *Amen*. In the year of His Holy Incarnation, 1306, &c., firstly, in the Council of One Hundred, and subsequently in the council and through the special council of *Messere lo Capitano* and the masters of the twelve greater guilds (these having already increased in number) . . . and farthermore, at once, without delay, in the council and through the general and special council of *Messere lo Capitano* and of the people of Florence, and of the masters of the guilds . . . done, confirmed, and carried the vote by sitting and rising, as prescribed by the same Statutes. . . . Likewise after these proceedings, in the same year, same '*indiction*' and day, in the council and by the general council of three hundred and special council of ninety men of the Florentine Commune, with the aforesaid guild-masters, by order of the noble gentleman, Messere Count Gabrielli d'Agobbio of the same city and Commune of Florence, Podestà, &c." Here it should also be noted that although in this case the councils of the Podestà assembled on the same day as those of the captain, yet according to law and usage the former should not have been convoked until one or two days had elapsed.

[1] *Vide* "Delizie degli eruditi Toscani," by P. Ildefonso, vol. vii. pp. 203–286.

accordingly resolved to treat the Ghibellines in the same way, and during the years 1268 and 1269 about three thousand were condemned, including contumacious rebels, and as many sentences of confiscation pronounced, which remained enforced for a long period.[1] At first, all confiscated property was collected to form a so-called "*monte*," or fund; then afterwards it became the custom to divide this into three parts: one to the Commune; one to individual Guelphs as indemnity for past losses; and the other third to the party, in order to strengthen it at the Ghibellines' expense. In course of time, however, almost all confiscated estates were granted to the party alone, and their administration entrusted to six governors, chosen for the purpose, three of whom were nobles and three men of the people. These officials were originally styled consuls of the knights, then captains of the Guelph party, in deference to the ill-omened counsels of Pope Clement IV. and Charles of Anjou. As every important magistracy of the time was associated with two councils, so the Captains of the party also possessed a special or privy council of fourteen, and a council-general of sixty members.[2] The Captains kept office for two months, and held their sittings in the Church of Sta. Maria sopra Porta. Later on they had a palace of their own, and were entrusted with the

[1] Del Lungo "Una Vendetta," in "Firenze Arch. Stor. It.," Series iv. vol. xviii. p. 354 and fol.

[2] The *Giornale Storico degli Archivi Toscani*, anno i., No. 1, contains "Lo Statuto di Parte Guelfa," of 1335, edited by Bonaini, whose learned commentary on the same appeared in subsequent numbers. Villani tells us (vii. 17) that, "by mandate from the Pope and the king, the said Guelphs *nominated three* knights as rectors of the party." But this must be a blunder, since, according to the statutes of the party, three knights and three men of the people were named to the office. A document dated December 12, 1268, appended to Del Lungo's "Una Vendetta in Firenze," mentions, "*Unus de sex Capitaneis Partis Guelforum.*" Villani, in the same chap. xvii., confuses Pope Clement with Pope Urban, deceased in 1264. The statute of 1335 adds a third council, of one hundred, to the others, and this probably served the same purpose with regard to the councils as that fulfilled by the parliament to the Republic.

superintendence of public works, of the officials of the Towers, and other functions of a similar kind. But their chief duty was always to promote the cause and persecute Ghibellines. They performed their task with so much zeal, pursuing their adversaries so fiercely, that at last the ruling spirit among the Captains of the party was the virtual ruler of Florence. By excluding all opponents from public posts, sentencing them to exile, and confiscating their goods, these functionaries rose to increasing power, and injured the Republic they served.

Taking a general view of the new constitution, with all its intricate multiplicity of councils and magistracies, our first impression is that all was confusion and arbitrary rule. But on looking more closely into the purpose for which it had been formed, we are obliged to admit that this government was singularly well adapted for success. Civil war is not yet stamped out: on the contrary, must undoubtedly continue for a long time; democracy is pressing on towards the fulness of its triumph and the complete destruction of the aristocracy. Nor will democracy be satisfied with ousting the nobles from the government of the republics, but will seek to deprive them of life itself, and this is only to be accomplished by much bloodshed and many revolutions.

In the new political organisation, the central power, soon to be changed every two months, occupies a very feeble position compared with the high importance, permanence, and strength now assigned to the Podestà and the Captain. These officers are at the head of the Commune and the people; each of them presides over two councils: they are, as it were, the chiefs of two armed and hostile republics. But in that of the people, hitherto the weaker, no patrician is admitted; while in that of the Commune, the people has assumed a very important position relatively to that of the nobles, and therefore has legally obtained

the casting vote in all decisions, notwithstanding the supremacy virtually exercised by Charles of Anjou in moments of the gravest emergency. It is easy to foresee the bitterness of strife to be engendered by this state of things. If we likewise remember that this Republic, as though foredoomed to civil war, included so important a magistracy as the Captains of the party, apparently created for the sole purpose of perpetuating discord, as an engine of war, serving to keep all these heterogeneous forces in continual agitation and promote ceaseless bloodshed and destruction, we can understand the course of coming events in Florence. We must be prepared for continual struggles, restless changes of institutions and laws, prepared to behold webs carefully woven one month pulled to pieces before the next moon begins to wane. Nevertheless, the whole machinery of the government was singularly fitted to compass the end that the Republic from the first had constantly in view.

IX.

Much more, however, remains to be said in order to give our readers a lucid and adequate idea of the Constitution and society of Florence in the latter half of the thirteenth century. So far we have dwelt too slightly on the most important detail of the new reforms—*i.e.*, the organisation of the guilds. The measures suggested for this purpose by the Thirty-six from their first meetings in the Calimala Court, and against which the nobles had most strongly protested, were speedily approved by the people, and from that moment became the chief basis of the Florentine statutes. Associations of arts and trades had existed throughout Italy from a very early date, and had soon attained greater development in Florence than

in other communes. For, as we have had occasion to note, the whole life of the people was concentrated in these associations when the Ghibelline tyranny, upheld by Manfred, excluded the lower classes from participation in the government of the city. Therefore all that was done now was to embody naturally evolved results in a more regular and legal shape. Only the greater guilds, seven in number, had risen to any really great political importance in 1260; the others had to wait much longer before being reorganised on the same footing. What was the position attained by the seven greater guilds at the moment we are now studying? By devoting our attention to the guild that was first and foremost in the race it will serve as a model, and enlighten us as to the others.

At the period of which we treat the fine arts flourished in Italy side by side with trade, and this was not only advantageous to the national culture, but already enabled our manufactures to dictate the laws of taste to all Europe. In those times Florence, Milan,[1] and Venice set the fashions, as Paris sets them now. The fine Italian taste helped to create the *Calimala*[2] trade, and secured its rapid prosperity. This trade was the art of dressing foreign cloths—from Flanders, France, and England—and dyeing them with colours known to Florence alone. Then, in their finished state, these stuffs were sent to all the European markets stamped with the mark of the Calimala Guild. This mark was highly prized as a proof of good quality, as showing that the exact length of the pieces had been scrupulously verified in Florence, and as a guarantee against any falsification of material. It is therefore easy to see why the Calimala merchants had

[1] The English word "milliner" is derived from *Milan*.

[2] The term *calimala* seems to have been taken from the name of the street in which the guild was situated. The street led to a house of ill-fame, hence the name *Calis malus*, in the sense of *Via mala*—evil road or lane.

trading relations with all Europe, and interests extending to every place where civilisation and luxury were known.

Hence the necessity, even in early times, of choosing directors of the guild, framing statutes, and appointing consuls abroad as well as at home, to protect its undertakings. Now, however, with the newly inaugurated reforms, the Calimala, together with the other greater guilds, was constituted on the lines of a miniature republic.[1]

Every six months, *i.e.*, in June and December, the heads of warehouses and shops held a meeting, and this *Union*—exercising much the same function in the guild as that of the parliament in the Republic—chose the electors to be charged with the nomination of the magistrates. First came four consuls, who administered justice according to the statutes, acted as representatives of the guild, and ruled it with the assistance of two councils, one being a special council with a minimum of twelve members, and the other a general assembly often varying in number and sometimes limited to eighteen. With the consent of these councils the consuls were even empowered to alter the statutes. They carried the banner of the guild, and in emergencies the citizens assembled at arms under their command. Then there was the *camarlingo*, or chamberlain, holding office for one year, who administered the revenue and expenditure of the association. And even as the Republic had a foreign magistrate in the person of the Podestà, so the guild had one also in the person of its notary, likewise appointed for one year. He was chosen by the council-general, had to speak in both councils as the representative of the consuls; was often employed on

[1] A statute of the Calimala Guild, dated 1332, is given in the appendix of Giudici's "Storia dei Municipi Italiani." Another, dated 1301–2, has been published, with a commentary by Dr. Filippi, "Il più antico Statuto dell' Arte di Calimala." Turin: Bocca, 1889. The statutes formulated regulations already long in vigour by means of special laws.

missions for the guild, and was specially charged to enforce scrupulous observation of the statutes, with the power of inflicting severe punishment on all violators of the same, were they even the consuls themselves. All these officials were sworn adherents of the Guelph party. The notary's stipend was fixed from year to year. The consuls were bound to accept office if elected, and could not be re-elected under an interval of one year; their salary was first fixed at ten *lire*, and the product of certain fines; but was afterwards reduced to several pounds of pepper and saffron, and a few wooden baskets and spoons. The *camarlingo*, or *camerario*, was remunerated even more slightly, and much in the same way. Three accountants were chosen every year to investigate the actions of the outgoing consuls, *camarlingo*, and other magistrates. Twelve statutory merchants were similarly elected, with authority to revise and improve the statutes of the guild; but all reforms suggested by them had to be approved first by both councils, and then by the Captain of the people. The consuls who, under the title of *capitudini*, took part in the councils of the Captain and Podestà, were pledged to protect the interests of the guild and advocate laws in its favour. But what were these statutes for the good of the trade of which so many magistrates enforced the observance? They prescribed fixed rules and regulations for the exercise of the business. Very severe punishments were enacted when the merchandise was of bad quality, defective, or counterfeit. Every piece of cloth was bound to be labelled, and any stain or rent unrecorded by this label entailed punishment on the merchant concerned. Above all, there was great strictness as to exactness of measure. The officers of the guild frequently inspected the cloth, and made a bi-monthly examination of the measures used in all the shops. Models of the prescribed measures were exhibited to the public in certain

parts of the city. Nor was this all. The consuls sent delegates to every counting-house to verify the merchants' books and accounts, and punished every deviation from established rules. Every guild had a tribunal composed either solely of its own members, or jointly with those of another, for the settlement of all disputes connected with the trade, and enforced severe penalties on all who referred such disputes to ordinary courts. It may be asked how the consuls were enabled to give effect to their verdicts? The punishments were generally fines, and persons refusing to pay them, after receiving several admonitions and increased fines if still recalcitrant, were excluded from the guild and practically ruined. From that moment their merchandise, being unstamped, was no longer guaranteed by the guild; they also lost many other notable advantages, and were finally unable to continue their business in Florence, and not often elsewhere. In fact, as we have seen, the consuls chosen in Florence guarded the interests of the guild even outside the State by deputing vice-consuls for that purpose to other parts of Italy and Europe, and increasing their number in proportion with the increase of their commercial relations. The two more important consuls abroad were those in France. All these delegates were charged with even the choice of the inns to be frequented by the members of the guild. Whenever, according to the usage of the day, any state exercised reprisals on the members' goods, the consuls were bound to assist and defend them. Thus, wherever he might be, a member of the guild was sure of protection from every sort of injury or loss. The guild was a jealous custodian of its members' rights, and, in order to defend them in foreign countries or to obtain justice for injuries received, often despatched ambassadors to the governments concerned.[1] This was an invaluable

[1] All these details of the Calimala Guild are to be found in the statutes cited above. We have quoted from the earliest statutes.

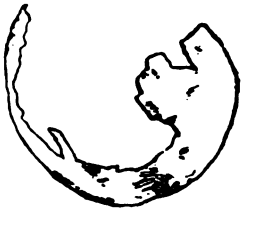
help at a time when no international law existed for the protection of foreigners, and reprisals were continually used. Accordingly merchants found it better to submit to any penalty rather than be dismissed from the guild ; no worse threat was needed to enforce obedience to the statutes. The six other greater guilds were all governed on the same principle as the *Calimala*. Their united body of consuls formed the *capitudini*, and these were afterwards headed by a proconsul, a magistrate held in the highest esteem.

Putting aside the immense commercial and industrial advantages that this organisation of the guilds afforded to the Republic during the thirteenth century, we shall see that they were equally useful from the political point of view. All these merchants, constituting a large majority of the citizens, were continually engaged in directing great undertakings, settling commercial disputes, discussing statutes and laws; they maintained relations with all parts of the known world, and travelled to all parts on special missions in defence of their common interests. We see that they all took a continuous and eager share in political life, inasmuch as every guild was an independent, self-ruling institution, with separate magistrates, laws, statutes, and councils, and that it became a centre of industrial, intellectual, and political activity. Thanks to this freedom of circulation, the pulse of the Florentine people was quickened to redoubled strength, and every faculty of the human mind, all moral and political energy of which man is capable, suddenly rose to a prodigious height in Florence. Choosing any one of these merchants almost at random, one might be sure to find him capable of governing the Republic ; a man to be trusted with the most delicate of diplomatic missions, and honourably acquit himself of it ; one able to command a respectful hearing from Pope, king,

or emperor, without allowing himself to be duped, yet without failing to conform to the requirements of court ceremonial. Thus the Florentines rose to great fame throughout Europe for their shrewdness and subtlety, and as in the midst of all this extraordinary commercial and political activity Italian art and literature also developed, the small mercantile Republic soon shed its lustre over the whole world.

The greater guilds also achieved another good result in Florence. At a time when the State organisation divided the city in two halves, as it were; at a time when the strife of factions was about to be fiercely renewed, when party leaders excited men's passions by nourishing the flame of discord, and the continual change of the supreme Council of Twelve transferred the direction of the government to citizens of all tempers, and all devoted to their respective parties, then the decentralisation of the government in a large number of small associations was indeed an inestimable benefit. If nobles or people rebelled against their rulers in order to change the Twelve, or the Podestà, the Captain, or even the statutes, the suspension of public business that inevitably ensued produced much less real than apparent confusion. Being split up into so many small associations, the Republic could exist without a government even for several months; since the armed, disciplined, and strongly constituted guilds, were now even better prepared than in past times to seize the reins, and prevent the troubles which would have certainly befallen the city had it been left without guidance. Thus the constitution of the guilds, as established in 1266, likewise serves to explain how it was that poetry, painting, sculpture, and architecture were enabled to flourish among a people of traders; even as it explains why so much progress was possible amid such, apparently, enormous confusion, and how democracy

succeeded in destroying every relic of feudalism in Florence, and in achieving absolute equality together with the highest degree of freedom known to the Middle Ages. The Florentine Commune was the centre of so much culture because it was also the seat of the largest freedom compatible with the times. Of this culture the best and loveliest fruits are owed to the democracy; for we find in Arnolfo's towers and churches, in the paintings of Cimabue and Giotto, as also in Dante's verse, the special stamp and characteristic of the Florentine people. During the Middle Ages in Provence, France, Germany, and England, many nobles rose to literary fame, and indeed nearly all the poets of those lands were of patrician birth. But Florentine art and letters, constituting the most fertile seeds of art and letters in Italy, were essentially republican; many writers, and most of the artists, of Florence were the offspring of traders or labouring men.



CHAPTER V.

FLORENCE THE DOMINANT POWER IN TUSCANY.[1]

I.

AFTER the death of Frederic II., the Imperial throne long remained vacant. For twenty-three years no king of the Romans was definitively proclaimed in Germany, and sixty-two years elapsed before any prince came to Rome to assume the crown of the Empire. Therefore during this interval the Ghibelline party was left to its own resources, and its leaders tried to maintain their feudal rights by employing their forces and prestige against all communes and small potentates enjoying no chance of gaining the Imperial protection. Hence petty tyrants began to arise on all sides, Ghibelline lords for the most part, who, notwithstanding the many defeats endured by the aristocracy in Italy, derived new and unexpected advantages from the changed conditions of the times. Another factor of this result was the new mode of warfare. Men-at-arms were now the chief strength of an army, and these mounted soldiers, cased as well as their horses, in heavy armour and armed with long

[1] Originally published in the Milan *Politecnico*, Nos. for November and December, 1867.

spears, were able to overcome infantry before the latter's halberds could come into play. But a lengthy training was required for cavalry service, and it was increasingly difficult for artisans or merchants to pursue the military career to any effect, whereas war was becoming the chief occupation of the nobles. In fact, many of the leading patricians were acquiring a reputation in the new mode of war, gaining followers, and by taking the command of small companies gradually rising to power, and aspiring to become tyrants. For this and other reasons, to be made clearer farther on, nearly all the Lombard cities, and some of those in Central Italy, were now losing their independence.

The same ambitions doubtless existed among the Guelphs, but the feudal aristocracy had far less influence in their party, the majority of which consisted of merchants and wealthy men of the people. Besides, the Pope was a near neighbour during the interregnum of the Empire, the Guelph cities were at the same time under the dangerous protection of an ambitious pontiff, and that of the equally ambitious Charles I. of Anjou, peacemaker and vicar-imperial of Tuscany. Charles nominated the Podestà of every Guelph Tuscan city, and whenever he failed to appear in person, sent a representative, called by the chroniclers a royal *maliscalco*, with an escort of some hundred horse and foot. Pisa, Arezzo, and all other Ghibelline cities refusing to acknowledge his authority, were exposed to continual threats from without, and lacerated within their walls by the attacks of would-be tyrants. On the other hand, the Guelph cities lived in continual terror of the king's ambitious designs; but Charles's position was not sufficiently assured for him to be able to use his temporary and limited office as a pretext for asserting sovereign power over Tuscany, although such was his secret aim. For the moment it

was enough to play the part of high protector of all civic rights and privileges, so that the Guelph cities might be tricked into counting on his help both against Ghibelline attacks from without and internal treason in favour of tyranny.

The Florentines, however, were not easily hoodwinked regarding either future or present events. They had asked Charles to accord them his protection, but only within certain limits, which, at any cost, they were determined should not be overstepped. They too nourished a secret aim—namely, to use the king's forces, not for the increase of his power, but towards the establishment of their own supremacy in Tuscany. The authority of the Empire was much diminished in Italy; the temporal strength of the Papacy was also on the wane, and the Communes, realising their greater independence, hastened to enlarge their respective territories. All Italian cities now had this end in view. But if one city waxed powerful, all its neighbours had either to pursue the same course or become its prey. Thus there was continual war between this and that city, less from party strife or jealousy than in necessary defence of their own interests. Besides, with the new custom of hiring foreign soldiers and captains of adventure, any one with gold at his command could quickly collect a powerful force and attack some of his neighbours. Hence every city or state had to be always on the alert and continually enlarging its strength and power. It was for this purpose that the Florentines now resolved to turn to account the authority, prestige, and forces of King Charles.

Accordingly when (1267) his mandatories, the Podestà Emilio di Corbano,[1] and Marshal Philip de Montfort,[2]

[1] Ammirato (ed. of 1846; Florence, Batelli), i. 248.

[2] The chroniclers say Guy de Montfort, but the latter only came in 1269. *Vide* Del Giudice, Cod. Dipl. ii. 23.

with eight hundred French knights, arrived in Florence, a Florentine army, composed of recruits from two *sestieri* of the city, in junction with the French cavalry under Montfort, immediately marched to the siege of St. Ilario, or St. Ellero, in which castle a number of Ghibellines had sought refuge with their leader, Filippo da Volognano. The castle was taken, and its eight hundred Ghibelline defenders were all either killed or captured.[1] They comprised many members of the highest Florentine nobility, Uberti, Fifanti, Scolari, &c., and party hatred was then so fierce that a youthful scion of the Uberti, finding surrender inevitable, threw himself from the top of a tower to avoid falling into the hands of the Buondelmonti.[2] In the course of this campaign the castles of Campi and Gressa were captured; and many cities, including Lucca, Pistoia, Volterra, Prato, San Gimignano, and Colle, being won over to the Guelph cause by the expulsion of their Ghibellines, joined the Florentines in the League, or *Taglia*, commanded by the French marshal.

Pisa and Sienna still remained Ghibelline; the former had always been and still continued to be the strongest bulwark of the party in Tuscany; the latter had, as usual, given refuge to the banished Ghibellines of Florence, and also to some of Manfred's Germans who had escaped the massacre of Benevento. The Florentines had not yet suceeded in revenging the rout of Montaperti, and were burning to pluck this thorn from their side; while King Charles, equally eager for the destruction of all surviving friends and supporters of the Suabian line, was preparing

[1] Villani, vii. 19. The frequent mention of eight hundred knights by the chroniclers of this period excites doubts as to their accuracy. It is never safe to accept their statements regarding the number of this or that army. Probably eight hundred horse was a species of regulation number, signifying a squadron of French men-at-arms.

[2] Villani, vii. 19; Marchionne Stefani, rubric 138; Ammirato, lib. iii.

to come to Tuscany to lead the war against Sienna in person. Pending his arrival, the Florentines, after an abortive attack on the city, laid waste the surrounding territory, and finding that the exiles, the Germans and other Ghibellines, were entrenched at Poggibonsi, marched against that town with the French contingent and the Guelphs of the *Taglia*, and began preparations for a regular siege. At the same time King Charles entered Florence, and was naturally welcomed with great joy. All the chief citizens went forth to meet him, with the *Carroccio*, as a sign of the highest honour, and after spending a festal week in the city and raising several persons to the knighthood, the king repaired to the camp before Poggibonsi. The siege lasted four months, and then, towards the middle of December, 1267, the stronghold was driven to surrender by famine. Charles left a Podestà there to govern in his name, and began to build a fortress, providing for that expense, in his accustomed way, by levying heavy taxes from the cities of the League. Florence had to contribute 1,992 *lire*. After this, the army was immediately marched against Pisa. The reduction of this powerful and warlike republic proved no easy task; the king had to be satisfied for the time with humiliating it, by seizing Porto Pisano and levelling the towers there. In February, 1268, he repaired to Lucca, and marching thence to the siege of Mutrone, captured that castle and gave it to the Lucchese. Thus, by a series of small victories, which, although of slight importance, were achieved with dazzling rapidity, he greatly raised the authority and prestige of the Guelph party, which had not only contributed troops to the war, but borne its entire expense, granting all the large sums of money continually demanded by their imperious protector. In fact, by the end of February, 1268, Florence alone had disbursed no less than seventy-two thousand *lire*,

twenty thousand of which were devoted to the reduction of Poggibonsi, although Charles had not fulfilled his promise of erecting a fortress there. But at this moment a war-cry was raised, stirring all Italy to alarm, and the monarch was suddenly threatened by so imminent a peril, that after some hesitation he was compelled to decide on flying to the defence of the Neapolitan kingdom.

II.

Prince Conradin, son of Conrad, and grandson of Frederic II., was the last representative of the Suabian line in Germany, and the last hope of the Ghibellines in Italy. He was rightful heir to the crown of Naples that Charles of Anjou had forcibly usurped; and in many quarters he was regarded as the future emperor of Germany. On attaining the age of fifteen years, numerous exiles, from Naples, Sicily and other parts of Italy, sought his presence, imploring him to reconquer his kingdom and restore the Imperial party in Italy. Conradin was a youth of precocious intelligence, full of ardour and ambition; so, fired by this flash of hope, he instantly resolved to cross the Alps. Selling what little property remained to him, and collecting the most devoted of his adherents, he gathered a small army and entered Verona on the 20th of October, with three thousand horse and a considerable number of infantry. From this city he despatched letters to all the Christian powers, recounting his misfortunes: the injuries inflicted on him by the usurpation of King Charles and the hatred of Pope Urban IV., who, not content with summoning a French pretender to trample on the Imperial rights, had gone to the length of excommunicating the legitimate heirs of the Empire itself. By way of reply, Pope Clement now

renewed the sentence of excommunication on Conradin, tried to stir all the powers against him by means of violent and venomous epistles; and wrote pressingly to Charles, now waiting to give battle in Tuscany, bidding him hasten to defend his kingdom from the threatened and imminent danger. In fact, the Ghibelline movement was now spreading throughout Italy. Pisa and Sienna were roused to great hopes, for the cities of Romagna, Naples, and especially of Sicily, had all risen against the French. By April, 1268, Conradin was already in Pisa with his army, and numerous adherents flocked to his standard, although the emptiness of his purse had caused some of the Germans to desert. By this time Charles had reached Naples, was making preparations for defence, and laying siege to Lucera, where Manfred's Saracens had hoisted the Suabian flag. Conradin was ready to fly thither, without even halting in Tuscany to encourage the cities revolted in his favour. Pisa and Sienna openly sided with him; Poggibonsi had promptly thrown off the Florentine yoke; and other places were preparing to do the same. Meanwhile, the German troops at once directed their march on Rome, where the Senator Errico of Castile was awaiting them. The French in Florence sallied forth to intercept their passage, but were driven back with heavy loss, to the great encouragement of Conradin and his followers.

But the prince's fate was to be decided by the battle of Tagliacozzo, fought near the banks of the Salto on August 23, 1268. At the beginning of the engagement Charles's inferior forces seemed almost routed, so that the German horse rode forward on all sides in pursuit. But while all were scattered, riding down and pillaging their retreating foes, Charles suddenly fell on them with the reserve of eight hundred horse he had kept in ambush, and quickly turned the fortunes of the day. The same evening, in a frenzy of delight, he announced his victory

to the Pope, who was equally exultant. The prisoners were treated with unparalleled cruelty, being mutilated, beheaded, or even burnt alive. Conradin escaped with about five hundred men, and escorted by Henry of Austria, Galvano Lancia, Count Gherardo Donatico of Pisa, and other devoted friends, made for Rome. But being then deserted by most of his followers, he had to fly to the Maremma and seek shelter in the Castle of Astura. But here, by the sea, when on the point of embarking for Sicily with a handful of friends, he was seized by Giovanni Frangipani, lord of Astura, who handed him over to Charles, and was rewarded by grants of land.

The French monarch hastened to manifest his joy by renewed acts of cruelty. It is said that one of the towers of Corneto was garlanded with the corpses of some of the most distinguished and valiant Ghibellines. In all the Neapolitan cities he excited the populace to the fiercest excesses against the nobles of Conradin's party. And his ministers in Sicily outrivalled one another in ferocity, for it is said that, among other barbarities, so many unhappy Sicilians were put to death in one day at Augusta, that the executioner became exhausted with fatigue, and wine was poured down his throat to give him strength to continue the slaughter. But the king's ferocious mind was chiefly devoted to considering what should be Conradin's fate. To murder thousands of fellow Christians, and let them die amid the worst torments, was a matter of very slight consequence to him; but where a victim of royal and Imperial blood was in question, he felt obliged to hesitate a little. In fact, it is said that he sought counsel from the Pope; but then, without waiting the reply, he sought to give an honest colour to his revenge by investing it with a false air of legality. He presumed to treat the rival whose

throne he had usurped as one who had rebelled against a legitimate sovereign, and to treat a prisoner of war as a criminal guilty of high treason, and justly responsible for all the excesses of the German soldiery during the campaign. Yet, although the tribunal consisted of foes of the Hohenstauffen selected by the king, some of its members spoke nobly in Conradin's defence. It was affirmed that Guido du Suzzara, a juris-consult of Emilia, renowned in his day, pleaded the youthfulness of the accused, his belief in his own right to the Neapolitan crown, the motives of the campaign. It was also reported that many of the judges remained silent, and that one alone openly declared against the prisoner. But all was in vain. Charles, who had already put some of the barons to death, and forced one of them, Count Galvano Lancia, to witness the strangling of his own son before being executed, never intended the trial to be more than a sham, so, choosing to interpret the judges' silence as a sign of consent to the prince's death, gave sentence accordingly. The verdict was communicated to Conradin in prison while he was playing chess with his cousin Frederic of Austria. On October 29, 1268, both were lead to the scaffold on the Market Place at Naples. The protonotary Roberto di Bari, counsel for the prosecution, read the sentence aloud, in the presence of the exultant King Charles. It is asserted that even many of the French were stirred to rage and humiliation by this cruel scene. An immense throng filled the Piazza, and many fell on their knees touched with pity. Conradin removed his cloak, glanced at the silent people, threw his glove to them, as an augury of vengeance in time to come, and then submitted his neck to the axe. Thus died the Emperor Frederic's heir, the last of the Suabian line. Frederic of Austria tried to kiss his cousin's head, but was instantly seized by the executioner and put to

the same death. Many details, either historical or legendary, are added by the chroniclers in describing this dismal tragedy. Although a Guelph, Villani believed the false rumour (vii. 29) to the effect that Count Robert of Flanders, son-in-law to Charles, on hearing the sentence read by di Bari, was moved to such fury that he drew his sword and slew the protonotary forthwith before the king's eyes. At least, this tale serves to show what was the general impression produced by the deed. Opinions vary as to the Pope's share in the tragedy. It is certain that he beheld it in silence.[1]

III.

Although these events excited general and very severe condemnation in Italy, they wrought immediate benefit to Charles and the Guelphs. The Florentines profited by the opportunity to launch new sentences against the Ghibellines, and shortly afterwards prepared to make fresh attacks on their neighbours, and particularly on Sienna. For they still yearned to avenge the defeat at Montaperti, and were now additionally irritated by seeing their exiles again flocking to Sienna, and heartily welcomed there. They also held that city responsible for the recent revolt of Poggibonsi, and their action in devastating the latter's territory sufficed to start hostilities afresh. The hopes of the Siennese had been greatly inflamed by Conradin's passage, and even now they were not disposed to be easily worsted. The chief ruler of the city was still Provenzano Salvani, one of those who had advised the battle of Montaperti and given notable proofs of valour in the fight. Since then his fame had been

[1] Gregorovius, vol. v. chap. 8; Cherrier, "Storia della lotta dei Papi e degli Imperatori di Casa Sveva," lib. x.

increased by many noble deeds. It was said that when a friend of his was seized by King Charles and condemned to pay a fine of ten thousand crowns in exchange for his life, Provenzano came to the rescue, and as neither he nor the prisoner's kindred could contrive to pay the ransom, he stretched a carpet on the Piazza and stood there, asking public alms for his friend until the required sum was collected. Consequently he had great influence with the people, was a Ghibelline and the declared enemy of Florence. Sienna likewise contained a considerable number of Spaniards and Germans, old soldiers of the Ghibelline wars, and there was also Count Guido Novello, who, although of little worth, continually agitated in favour of hostilities. Thus an army was recruited, consisting, Villani says, of fourteen hundred horse and eight thousand foot, and this force besieged the Castle of Colle in Val d'Elsa, as a reprisal for the devastation of Poggibonsi. Thereupon the Florentines took the field with a small body of infantry, led by the vicar of King Charles, and eight hundred horse, and notwithstanding their inferiority of numbers advanced against the Siennese, gave them battle (June 17, 1269), and achieved their defeat. Count Guido Novello secured his safety, as usual, by flight; but Provenzano Salvani justified his fame by dying sword in hand. His head was carried round the field on the point of a spear. This was the fulfilment of a prophecy made to him before the battle: "Thy head shall be the highest in the field," although he had interpreted the saying as an omen of success. The Siennese received no quarter from their foes, who returned home in triumph, and thinking they had now avenged the rout of Montaperti, began negotiations for peace. The first condition exacted was that Sienna should no longer harbour Ghibelline refugees, who, in fact, were soon compelled to depart and wander from place to place, every-

where exposed to persecution and cruelty. Among others were the Pazzi, who, having excited the Castle of Ostina to revolt, were seized and hacked to pieces.

After a devastating raid on Pisan territory, executed by the Florentines and Lucchese, Pisa signed a treaty of peace with Charles in April, 1270. Florence herself concluded an alliance with that republic on the 2nd of May, stipulating almost the identical terms and the same politico-commercial agreements previously arranged by the peace of 1256.[1] Just at that time Azzolino, Neracozzo, and Conticino degli Uberti, together with a knight named Bindo dei Grifoni, left Sienna to take refuge in the Casentino, and were captured by the Florentines on the way. The latter asked Charles what should be done with these prisoners, and he replied, that they were to be punished as traitors, save Conticino the youngest, who was to be sent to him. The others were speedily beheaded, by order of the Podestà Berardino d'Ariano (May 8, 1270). It is related that on nearing the scaffold Neracozzo said to Azzolino : " Whither are we going ? " To which his kinsman quietly replied : " To pay a debt bequeathed us by our fathers." Conticino perished in a Capuan dungeon. This instance clearly proves the great supremacy exercised by Charles over the Commonwealth. But the Florentines were willing to tolerate anything from him in order to assure their predominance in Tuscany by his help, and restore the prestige of the Guelph party. The latter aim was already practically achieved, for all Tuscany now adhered to the Guelphs, and both old and recent injuries had been avenged. At this time Florence also demolished the Castle of Pian di Mezzo in the Val d'Arno and razed the walls of Poggibonsi.

Meanwhile, however, the power of the Angevins had swelled to a formidable extent. Charles was firmly

[1] Ammirato, i. 262 ; " Delizie degli Eruditi," vol. ix. p. 41.

established on the Neapolitan throne; and during the interregnum had been nominated by the Popes senator of Rome and vicar-imperial of Romagna as well as Tuscany. Accordingly, while restoring the strength of the Guelph party, he had notably aggrandised his own authority. His lurking ambition to be master of all Italy was now clearly discernible, and accordingly the Florentines began to kick against his perpetual interference, and to object to every commune being subject to a Podestà of his choice exercising absolute judicial power in his name and under his authority. And as though this were not enough, there was also a royal marshal or vicar in Tuscany who jointly with the rest perpetually harassed the city by threatening demands for fresh subsidies. But even greater than elsewhere was the jealousy excited in Rome. The Popes had summoned the Angevins to the overthrow of the Suabians, less on account of these being Ghibellines, those Guelphs, than because the Suabians had entertained the identical ambition that Charles was now beginning to conceive. Accordingly, there was now the same motive for combating him.

Niccolò Machiavelli has often repeated that the Popes "always feared every one who rose to great power in Italy, albeit his power was exercised by favour of the Church. And inasmuch as they [the Popes] sought to lower that power, frequent tumults would arise and frequent changes of power, since fear of a tyrant led to the exaltation of some feebler personage, and then, as his power became increased, he in turn was feared, and, being feared, his overthrow was desired. Thus, the government taken from Manfred was conceded to Charles; thus, later, when he excited fear, his ruin likewise was planned."[1] In fact, Urban IV. had invited Charles to seize the kingdom of Naples; Clement IV. had named

[1] Machiavelli, "Storie," vol. i. p. 77. Italy, 1813.

him his vicar; Gregory X. was now beginning to oppose him, and succeeding pontiffs followed his example. Thus three different political games were now being played in Central Italy: the Angevins already yearning for the dominion of Italy; the Florentines scheming to use the French monarch's power to assure their own predominance in Tuscany; and the Popes seeking to check the king's ambition and resume their former supremacy over that state.

IV.

The first sign of this alteration in the Papal policy was quickly detected by Florence, although Rome used every device to conceal the real cause and object of the change; and, indeed, to prevent its change of purpose from appearing on the surface. Gregory X. began by expressing regret that a city so rich and powerful as Florence should still be divided by the party strife of the Guelphs and Ghibellines. He desired to see them at peace. No wish should have seemed more natural on the part of the Head of the Church; but it roused the king's suspicions to find the Pope suddenly inflamed by such unusual compassion towards the Ghibellines. His distrust was heightened on seeing how cheerfully the Florentines accepted the proposals of the Pope. They had already shown signs of wishing to shake off the royal yoke by requesting the king to give them an Italian Podestà, as their statutes required, and already in January, 1270,[1] he had felt

[1] "Ipsas petitiones benigne accessimus et audivimus cum effectu, primo de conservando iure et honore Comunis Florentie; contra Pisanos et Senenses invasores et Gibellinos et exiticios terre vestra et infideles Podiibonizi proditores nostros proponimus, cum Dei auxilio atque vestro, facere vivam guerram, donec peniteant de commissis, et vos de factis vestris habeatis comodum et honorem. . . . Vicarium Ytalicum virum providum discretum et fidelem, cuius devotionem, fidem et probitatem in magnis factis nostris cognovimus, firmiter et ab experto

obliged to make this concession in a graciously worded decree. Instantly divining the real intention of Rome, the Florentines now understood that the moment had come to second it for their own advantage. They were all the more willing to do so not only to impose a check on the growing tyranny of the king, but in order to remedy another evil wrought by his supremacy in Florence. Charles was always surrounded by his own barons and captains, whose foreign presence was unwelcome, and by Guelph nobles and knights not only of Tuscany, but from other parts of Italy as well. In Florence he constantly favoured the old Guelph nobility, and on every visit to the city created new knights. Thus, ennobled Guelph merchants were joined to the other aristocrats, and assuming the rank of *grandi*, soon became opposed to the people, and revived the old antipathy of the Florentine democrats, who, just as they had rebelled in past times against the feudal pride of the Ghibellines, now refused to tolerate that of the old and new Guelph patriciate. Therefore it was necessary to curb the *grandi* at any cost, and it seemed the wisest plan to recall the Ghibellines, who were equally opposed to them and the king. Thus the people would be strengthened by the division of the nobles, and the latter, by quarrelling among themselves, would lessen the number of those most subservient to Charles. The king, however, could not be blind to the hidden purpose of these intrigues, and was quite awake to the Pope's real intentions. He knew that the latter was now urging the Germans to elect Rudolf of Hapsburg as King of the Romans, in order to

vobis concessimus secundum quod vestra postulatio continebat, et volumus quod sit contentus salario et expensis et emendis, prout in ipsius Civitatis statutis comtinetur, nec ultra aliquid exigat." Del Giudice, "Codice Diplomatico," ii. 116–17.

We find that several Italian Podestà were afterwards appointed in Florence by Charles.

put an end to the Imperial interregnum, and consequently to his own tenure of the vicariate. Why should the Pope desire the election of an emperor save for the purpose of weakening the Angevin power? Meanwhile both pontiff and king preserved a feint of amity, and seemed to be on the best possible terms, although their mutual distrust continually flashed forth.

Gregory X. had decreed the convocation of a Council at Lyons in 1274 in order to promote a crusade against the infidels; and reaching Florence on June 18, 1273, suspended his journey for awhile for the purpose, as he said, of re-establishing the general peace. He arrived with his whole train of cardinals and prelates, accompanied by the Emperor of Byzantium, Baldwin II., who came to ask Christian aid against the Infidel, and escorted by Charles of Anjou, whose sense of the honour due to the pontiff, so he said, forbade leaving him alone in Florence. And as the Pope found the city to his liking, he decided to spend the whole summer there. The 2nd of July was the day fixed for the solemn reconciliation of the Guelphs and Ghibellines, and the syndics, or leaders, of either party were gathered in the town. On the waste of dry sand in the bed of the Arno by the Ponte alle Grazie wooden platforms had been erected, and here the Pope, the Emperor Baldwin, and Charles of Anjou were seated in state. The oath of peace was sworn in the presence of a great throng of spectators; the syndics exchanged kisses, and the Pope gave his benediction, threatening excommunication on all who should dare to break the peace. Both sides gave hostages and yielded castles as pledges of faith, and everything seemed to be arranged in accordance with the benevolent intentions of the Pope. The Holy Father was lodged in the palace of his bankers, the Mozzi, Baldwin in that of the archbishop, and Charles occupied several houses in the Frescobaldi gardens.

There was now time to enjoy life in Florence before the return of the banished Ghibellines and the festivals to be given in their honour. But suddenly it was learnt that the Ghibelline syndics, instead of carrying out the concluding terms of the peace, had hastily fled from Florence. And the reason alleged for this was, that the king's vicar had sent them an intimation that unless they left the city without delay, he would have them all cut to pieces at the request of the Guelph nobles. Thereupon the Pope instantly set out for the Mugello, much enraged not only with the king, but even more with the Florentines for their indifference to the whole farce, and he punished their violation of the oath by pronouncing an interdict on the city.

Meanwhile Charles continued his aggressive policy with regard to the Ghibellines, and was seconded by the Florentines, who marched out under the banner of the Commune, sometimes alone, but oftener in junction with the French cavalry, to impose peace and assure the triumph of their party in all the neighbouring towns. But their arrogant daring was sometimes pushed too far. When the Ghibellines were expelled from Bŏlogna, the Florentines immediately set out to proffer their unrequested aid to that city. But, much to their amazement, on reaching the banks of the Reno, they found the Bŏlognese waiting to drive them back. The latter had achieved their purpose of banishing the Ghibellines, but had no intention of allowing the haughty Florentines to come to disseminate their own party rancours under pretence of assisting the city. The Podestà of the Florentines was killed in trying to push through the opposing force, and the humiliated expedition had to retrace its steps (1274).

They were more fortunate with regard to Pisa. That city, being torn by party strife, had banished Giovanni Visconti, judge of Gallura, and Count Ugolino della

Gherardesca di Donoratico, two ambitious Ghibelline nobles, who, deserting their own for the Guelph cause, applied to the Florentines for help. They immediately granted it, and joining forces with their new friends and the French, invaded the territories of their old rival, capturing the Castle of Asciano in September, 1275. The following June, at the instigation of the same exiled nobles, they resumed hostilities with a larger army, aided by the Lucchese and other Guelphs, and accompanied by the king's marshal. Again victorious, they compelled Pisa to make peace on June 13, 1276, and recall her exiles, especially the Count Ugolino, whose ambition was destined to bring fatal consequences on himself and his native town.

Meanwhile Pope Gregory had returned from Lyons and reached Tuscany in December, 1275. Still highly irritated against Florence, he refused to enter its gates; but as the Arno was too swollen to be fordable, he was obliged to cross one of its bridges, and therefore raised the interdict from the city, although only during the time required for his passage. His death took place shortly afterwards, January 10, 1276, and in a single year three new Popes rapidly succeeded him: Innocent V., Adrian V., and John XXI. Then, on November 25, 1277, Nicholas III. was elected to the pontifical Chair, and during his three years' reign followed the same policy pursued by Gregory X., and with even greater zeal. Full of haughtiness and ambition, Nicholas sought to aggrandise his own family as well as the Papal power. He renewed the scandalous practice of nepotism and simony by making some of his kinsmen cardinals and appointing others to high offices of the State. But on trying to negotiate the marriage of one of his nieces with a nephew of King Charles, the latter mortally wounded his pride by the reply, that although the Pope had crimson hose, his blood

had not been sufficiently ennobled to be mixed with that of French royalty.[1] Nicholas III., already disgusted with the king, and suspicious of his motives, could not easily pardon this affront. Hence he seized the first opportunity to let Charles know that although Rudolf of Hapsburg had not yet been crowned emperor in Rome, he had been already elected king of the Romans in Germany, and that accordingly it was no longer needful for Charles to fill the post of vicar-imperial, only granted him during the interregnum. Thus the French monarch was finally compelled to resign the vicariate of Tuscany, the title of Roman Senator, and even his jurisdiction over Romagna and the Marches, that had been partly accorded to, partly usurped by him. Perceiving that there was no possibility of evading this blow, the king instantly yielded the point without showing the slightest resentment, so that the Pope was driven to declare: "This prince may have inherited his fortune from the House of France, his cunning from Spain, but his shrewdness of address could only have been acquired by frequenting the Court of Rome."[2] Nevertheless, he was not in the least deceived by the king's apparent calmness, and neglected no chance of diminishing his power and aggrandising that of the Holy See. Thus, when Giovanni da Procida was going through Italy seeking help for the Sicilian revolution that was soon to burst forth, he received encouragement from the Pope. Then, after showing much favour to Rudolph of Hapsburg, Nicholas profited by the occasion to obtain his sanction for extending the states of the Church as far as the Neapolitan frontier on one side, and for including the March of Ancona, Romagna and the Pentapolis on the other. And down to our own day the states of the Church preserved these boundaries

[1] Villani, vii. 54.
[2] Raynaldi, anno 1278; Sismondi, vol. ii. chap. vii.

almost unaltered. Although at the time, the domination of the Popes was chiefly nominal over part of this territory, yet by dint of insistence they gradually achieved practical supremacy over the whole of it.

V.

As a first step in this direction, Nicholas III. sent his nephew, Cardinal Latino de' Frangipani, to establish peace in Romagna. As a Dominican monk, Frangipani had shown great powers of oratory, and was therefore fitted to enforce the new authority of the Church. Count Bertoldo Orsini was also sent with him. After a short stay in Romagna, the cardinal was transferred to Florence to renew with better success the reconciliation of hostile parties Gregory X. had failed to conclude. Now, however, the Florentines themselves seemed really desirous of peace. Although freed from the too oppressive protection of King Charles, they still suffered from the evil results of his policy. The *grandi*, turbulent as ever, and with increased numbers and strength, were threatening division even among the Guelphs. Villani says of them that, "Resting from victories and honours won in wars abroad, and fattening on the lands of exiled Ghibellines and other fruits of enterprise, they began from pride and envy to fall out with one another; so that many quarrels and feuds arose among the citizens of Florence, and much killing and wounding." [1] First the Adimari began to stir riots from hatred against the Tosinghi, next the Pazzi and Donati came to blows; and this was seen to be a prelude to greater evils. Accordingly the Guelphs sent messengers to the Pope, praying him to send some one to pacify the city, unless he wished to see the party

[1] Villani, vii. 56.

divided against itself. The Ghibellines seemed equally anxious for peace. They were weary of prolonged exile and continual confiscation of their property, and cherished hopes that the popular hatred, being now inflamed against the Guelph nobles, would be softened towards themselves.[1]

Accordingly Cardinal Latino entered Florence on October 8, 1279, with three hundred knights and prelates in his train, and was received with every token of honour. The Florentine clergy went to meet him in procession, and the Republic sent forth the *Carroccio* with a great number of standard-bearers. Being a Dominican, he was lodged in the monastery of Santa Maria Novella, and laid the first stone of the celebrated church of that name. He immediately began the negotiations for the arrangement of peace.

On the 19th of November platforms were raised in the Piazza of Santa Maria Novella Vecchia, and the parliament being assembled there in the presence of the magistrates and councils, the cardinal asked and obtained the power of concluding peace with the same authority possessed by the people—that is to say, the right of imposing fines, decreeing confiscations, and occupying castles, to guarantee the due performance of the terms about to be sworn. He next essayed to reconcile the bitterest foes: Guelphs who had come to a rupture, quarrelsome Ghibellines, and hostile Guelphs and Ghibellines. All went well until he came to the Buondelmonti and Uberti, whose ancient hatred was too deeply rooted. It was impossible to persuade them to be reconciled, for some of them indignantly rejected the proposal. Hence the Cardinal had to decree their excommunication, and banish the more obstinate from the Commune. Finally, January 18, 1280, was fixed for the conclusion of the general peace. Great preparations for the ceremony were made in the Piazza of Santa Maria

[1] Ammirato, vol. i. p. 274.

Novella Vecchia ; the platforms were hung with tapestries, and the whole square carpeted with cloth. Hither came the Twelve, the Podestà, the Captain of the people (then styled Captain of the mass of the Guelph party), and their councils, together with all the rest of the magistrates, and a great concourse of spectators. Lastly came the cardinal with his attendant prelates, and the general excitement was heightened by the expectation of his speech, since he was known to be one of the most eloquent orators of his time. He gave an address on the merit and necessity of making peace, and finally the treaty was read aloud. It was to put an end to all the old hatreds ; it stipulated the restitution of confiscated property to the Ghibellines, with some interest on the capital ; all sentences, oaths, leagues, and associations made by the one party to the hurt of the other were declared null and void, and every clause of the statutes tending to the perpetuation of strife was to be cancelled. Either party was to furnish fifty sureties, and bound to forfeit the sum of fifty thousand silver marks, in case of any violation of the peace. As an additional guarantee certain castles were to be given up, and the right was reserved of demanding more hostages should occasion require. Then came a long string of minute stipulations, all directed to the same end. Many of the chief families were to be confined to fixed places until they made peace with their foes and gave money and hostages in pledge of good faith. The delegates of both parties kissed one another on the mouth, the documents of the treaty were solemnly registered, and party decrees of banishment and other sentences cancelled or burnt. The exiles were authorised to return ; and, without prejudice to the functions of the Podestà, the captains, and guild-masters, were charged with the strict maintenance of the terms of peace. For this reason the Captain was no longer to be entitled Captain of the Guelph party, but Captain of

the city and conservator of peace. Also, the office of vicar-imperial granted to Charles having now lapsed, it was decreed that henceforward the Podestà and Captain were to be nominated for two years by the Pope, and have each the command of fifty horse and fifty foot soldiers. After two years the right of election would be resumed by the people, provided their nominees were not opposed to, but actually approved by, the Head of the Church. Each Captain would then have the command of one hundred horse and one hundred foot, but, for the better preservation of peace, the said troops must neither be citizens nor natives of the territory. The guilds were likewise sworn to assist in maintaining peace. It was farther decreed that the statutes should be revised, the government of the city reformed, and an estimate made of the property of all persons who had been condemned to pay fines or damages.[1]

This would seem to show that the cardinal was almost in the position of a provisional dictator, with arbitrary power of decision. But he first consulted the magistrates as to many clauses proposed by him, while regarding other conditions of the agreement the Florentines obeyed them or not as they chose. The people desired peace for the reasons we have already described and the cardinal was therefore given full powers to conclude it on his own authority and that of the Church. But his success was far more apparent than real. In fact, the constitution of the

[1] Ammirato the younger was the first writer to give an exact report of this agreement, with minute details derived from State papers, in his additions to the elder Ammirato's "History" (Anno 1279 and 1280). Several documents are given in the "Delizie degli Eruditi Toscani," by Padre Ildefonso, vol. ix. p. 63 and fol. Still ampler details are given by Bonaini ("Della Parte Guelfa in Firenze") in the *Giornale Storico degli Archivi Toscani*, vol. iii. p. 167 and fol. *Vide* also A. Gherardi's recent and very important work, "Le Consulte della Repubblica Fiorentina" (Firenze, Sansoni). The original document of the Peace is to be found (mutilated) in the State Archives of Florence.

Guelph party remained in force, and as soon as he had gone, the city was again torn by faction strife. He left Florence on April 24, 1280, after receiving a recompense of "mille floreni auri in pecunia numerata, et alie zoie empte pro Comuni Florentie."

Nevertheless, during February and the beginning of March, he was so satisfied with his imagined success as to attempt the reconciliation of many adversaries confined to fixed domiciles. He likewise tried to give effect to the constitutional reforms prescribed by the peace; above all, that of replacing the twelve worthies by fourteen "good men," composed of eight Guelphs and six Ghibellines. These functionaries, in co-operation with the Captains and the councils, formed the government of the city, and were changed every second month. Nevertheless, the Podestà and Captain remained in office for one year more. The authority of the Podestà, as the nominee of King Charles, had been much diminished under the latter's rule; accordingly increased powers were now conferred on the Captain and Twelve, and the latter being augmented to fourteen,[1] constituted the supreme power or Signory of Florence.

This custom of changing the Signory every second month—a custom maintained to the close of the Republic—has given rise to much discussion. Certainly, this rapid mutation of the highest power in the State could not be favourable to peace; but, as we have had frequent occasion to note, the new constitution of the guilds had reduced the attributes of the central government to a minimum. Besides, the manifest tendency of all Italian

[1] The Fourteen are mentioned together with the Twelve in the cardinal's treaty of peace, and for some time later both bodies are simultaneously mentioned in the "Consulte," according to the usual Florentine custom of enumerating the old as well as the new magistrates. Subsequently the Fourteen alone are recorded, and the Twelve disappear entirely.

republics to degenerate into despotism made the Florentines distrustful of any Signory of longer duration. Now, too, the Ghibellines having returned, there was special cause to fear that the government might be induced to conspire in favour of some ambitious personage disposed to play the tyrant at a moment's notice. For these reasons, it was decided on the one hand to lessen the authority of the Podestà, and on the other to frequently change not only the heads of the government, but even, as will be seen, other political functionaries as well. Later on, election by ballot was adopted as another means of preventing the carrying out of any prearranged design against freedom.[1]

VI.

Meanwhile the King of the Romans was sending his vicar to Italy, with an escort of three hundred men only, to ascertain the temper of the land, and whether the cities still acknowledged the suzerainty of the Empire. On arriving in Tuscany, the vicar made halt at San Miniato al Tedesco, and found the Pisans still Ghibellines, and eager to swear fealty. But when the other Tuscan cities refused to recognise the rights of the Empire the Florentines corrupted the vicar with bribes, and, showing him the futility of his mission, persuaded him to depart acknowledging the force of the privileges granted them by the Pope.

Thus they dexterously contrived to make the altered policy of Rome a means of advancing their own interests and damaging those of King Charles, whose power over Central Italy was entirely lost. By once more calling the Empire to the front, and encouraging Rudolph of

[1] Villani, vii. 56; Ammirato (Florentine edition of 1846), lib. iii. p. 275, &c.

Hapsburg to assert himself against Charles, Nicholas III. succeeded in weakening both, while giving new strength to the Papacy. So, too, with equal sagacity, the Florentines had made use of the king to dominate Tuscany; of the Pope to enfeeble the king; and, finally, of both to avoid yielding submission to Rudolph.

Nicholas III. died in 1280. He had compelled Charles to leave Tuscany, and be satisfied with receiving from Rudolph the investiture of Provence and the kingdom of Naples. To render this agreement more binding, by means of a family alliance, Rudolph gave his daughter in marriage to a nephew of King Charles. But naturally the latter accepted the arrangement most reluctantly, and took every opportunity of secretly exciting the Tuscan Guelphs against the Ghibellines, who were again coming to the front. Also, having learnt by his own experience the serious difference between having the Popes as friends or as foes, he hastened to Orvieto, where the new conclave was sitting, determined to use every means to procure the election of some candidate favouring his views. As usual, he pursued this purpose unhesitatingly and without scruple. Perceiving that the cardinals were temporising, and dreading the consequences of delay, he excited a revolt, during which the populace captured two cardinals of the Orsini house, relations of the deceased Pope, and decidedly opposed to the Angevin interests. After this event the election took place, and on February 22, 1281, Martin IV. was proclaimed. The new pontiff was French, and being very friendly to Charles, immediately undertook to forward his policy and support the Guelphs.

But the general conditions of Italy were much changed, and therefore the king's triumph at Orvieto failed to prevent the consequences entailed by his cruelty in Naples, and by the policy of Nicholas III. from producing their natural effect. The latter's agreement with Rudolph was

ratified by the new Pope, who counselled the cities of Italy to accord a hearty welcome to the emperor's daughter, when she came as the bride of the king's nephew. Even Florence was obliged to give the princess an honourable reception, although she was accompanied by an Imperial vicar, who, as usual, abode at San Miniato, in order to attempt to resuscitate the rights of the Empire in Tuscany. But a far graver change occurred in March, 1282, when the Sicilians, wearied of misgovernment, at last snatched up the gauntlet thrown by Conradin to the people, and with the sanguinary revolt of the Vespers began the long and glorious war that was to free Sicily for ever from the Angevin yoke. In order to keep faith with the Guelph party and avoid unnecessarily irritating the Pope or the king, the Florentines sent five hundred horse to the latter's aid ; and this contingent, commanded by Count Guido di Battifolle of the Guidi house, and bearing the banner of Florence, took part in the siege of Messina. But the revolution was everywhere triumphant; the Florentines shared in the general defeat, and had to return, leaving their flag in the enemy's hands. The island was inevitably lost to the French.

Even before the outbreak of the Sicilian Vespers the Florentines had naturally begun to be on the alert and watchful of their own interests. Noting that the vicar was only attended by a small force, and gained few adherents, they soon tried to win him with gold, and succeeded in persuading him to leave the country after confirming the concessions previously granted to them. At the same time, profiting by the emperor's weakness in consequence of troubles at home, and by the fact of Charles being at a distance in Naples and already gravely preoccupied concerning the approaching crisis in Sicily, they seized the opportunity to make some constitutional reforms. First of all, now that the Podestà and Captain

were no longer elected by the king, but named instead by the Pope, they decided to grant them ampler powers, in order to keep the city quiet by checking the arrogance of the Ghibellines and tyranny of the *grandi*. Both factions were daily becoming more threatening; and particularly the latter, which cancelled magisterial decrees by absolute force, prevented the laws from being executed, committed murder either directly or indirectly for the sake of party revenge, and kept the city in a perpetual turmoil. It was therefore decreed to allow the Podestà greater freedom of action in the general repression of crime, and give the Captain a larger force with which to maintain order and punish criminals to whom the Podestà might have been too lenient. The *grandi* were not only bound to swear obedience to the laws, but to give hostages for their good faith; so that even should they succeed in escaping from the city after committing any crime, those who had given surety, or stood hostage for them, would have to suffer in their stead all punishments or fines to which the contumacious were condemned. To ensure the execution of all these decrees a thousand armed men were chosen among the citizens. Of this number two hundred were contributed by the Sesto of St. Piero Scheraggio, as many by that of the Borgo, the four other Sesti each giving 150 men, and then the whole thousand being divided in companies with the banners of the different quarters, or rather *sestieri* of the city, 450 men were placed at the orders of the Podestà, and 550 under the Captain's command. They bore colours given them by either magistrate in the presence of the public parliament, and whenever the bell rang the signal for their assembly no gatherings of the people were allowed in the city.[1]

[1] The old chronicles contain indications of these particulars, but for the minute description of them, corroborated by documentary evidence, *vide* Ammirato the younger, in his appendices to the "Storie" of Ammirato the elder.

This reform seemed the more indispensable, seeing that under Charles's rule the employment of citizen soldiers commanded by the gonfaloniers of the guilds had fallen into disuse, and order was maintained by means of foreign troops. Thus the Captain had forfeited much of the authority that it was now sought to restore to him. Now, too, we find the Fourteen empowered to conduct the government without summoning the Council of One Hundred, of which the documents cease to make mention. Owing to this, and also to the lack of concord between the eight Guelph and six Ghibelline members, the authority of the Fourteen, instead of being strengthened, suffered decline. Accordingly, another reform was in course of arrangement, when the outbreak of the Sicilian Vespers gave the Florentines more freedom of action. They had three special objects in view. Firstly, to make the Republic independent of Pope, emperor and king; secondly, to close accounts with the Ghibellines, because they were nobles, and as constant adherents to the Empire supported its pretensions in Tuscany; thirdly, to lower the pride of the *grandi*, whether Guelphs or Ghibellines, because their tyrannous deeds kept the city in continual disturbance. This, indeed, was one reason why the terms of Cardinal Latino's peace were no longer observed; and why, above all, the promised indemnities to injured Ghibellines had never been paid. Also, on February 8, 1282, a Guelphic League was concluded with Lucca, Pistoia, Prato, Volterra, and Sienna, whose adherence was compulsory; and San Gimignano, Colle, and Poggibonsi were also given permission to join. The members of the League swore to remain united ten years for the common defence, and were each pledged to hire five hundred horse with the customary number of squires. Also, as usual, the allies joined in a species of convention touching the exchange and passage of merchandise.

But the most important point for Florence was the internal reform of the city. All the guilds, and especially some of greater, were becoming more strongly organised, and acquiring increased political influence. In fact, the *capitudini*, or guild-masters, figure more frequently in the public records, side by side with the Fourteen, the Captain, and Podestà. It is at this period (1282–3) that we even find mentioned a *Defensor Artificum et Artium*, together with two councils, an indubitable sign of the growing power of the guilds.[1] For, although the *Defensor* disappears later on, and his office is deputed to the Captain, this change only occurred when the government of the Republic was actually carried on by the guilds. Meanwhile they already shared in the election of the Fourteen, and aided them with their advice. The chroniclers tell us that by a reform enacted in June, 1282, the priors of the guilds were finally raised to office in place of the Fourteen; but in fact the change happened less suddenly than might be inferred from their account of the matter. For we find that—as was always the case with Florentine reforms—the Fourteen continued to govern in co-operation with the new priors, until, overshadowed by the growing importance of the latter, they gradually disappeared altogether. It is certain that on June 15, 1282, three *Priors of the Arts* were made chiefs of the Republic—namely, the priors of the Calimala, Money Changers, and Woollen Guilds. They were attended by six guards (*berrovieri*), and had six heralds to summon the citizens to council; they dwelt in the Badia, without leaving it during their whole term of office, and generally deliberated in junction with the captain. The Fourteen remained in

[1] Dr. Hartwig, who first called attention to this point, also remarked that the office of *Defensor* is first recorded in the "Consulte," in November, 1282, and that the first Defender mentioned by name is Bernardino della Porta. "Consulte," pp. 116, 132, 133, 140, from November 6, 1282 to February 6, 1283.

office with them for some time longer, but chiefly *pro forma*.[1] After the first two months it was deemed necessary to increase the number of the priors, not only because three were found to be insufficient; but also being necessarily chosen from one or the other half of the six *sestieri*, they invariably seemed to represent one division only of the citizens. Accordingly, to avoid delay, in the August of the same year, the three guilds of Doctors and Druggists, Silkweavers and Mercers, Skinners and Furriers, were added to the original number. Other guilds also were subsequently added, but the number of the priors remained restricted to six, one for each *sestiere*. Compagni says that "their laws [or functions] consisted in guarding the property of the Commune, and in seeing that the signories did justice to every one, and that petty and feeble folk were not oppressed by the great and powerful."[2] At the end of their two months' term the priors, assisted by the guild-masters and a few additional citizens, designated as *arroti*, elected their own successors to office.

Villani affirms that the title of prior was derived from a verse of the Gospel, where Christ says to His disciples, "Vos estis priores." What is certain is that by means of this reform the guilds, or rather commerce and trade, had the whole government of the Republic in their hands; and it should also be noted that although the above-mentioned guilds, together with that of the jurists and notaries, constituted the seven greater arts, yet the legal guild—perhaps because it represented neither industry nor commerce—is left unnoticed by the chroniclers at

[1] Dr. Hartwig also ascertained that in the "Consulte" the first mention of the priors occurs on June 26, 1282. Their names are recorded after those of the Fourteen; on April 24, 1283, they are given precedence over the latter; and from December forwards they are mentioned alone, without the Fourteen.

[2] Bk. i. p. 25 and fol. (the Del Lungo edition).

this point. Henceforward the Commonwealth is a true republic of traders, and only to be governed by members of the guilds. Every title of nobility, whether old or new, becomes an impediment rather than a privilege.

Consequently many of the principal families began to change their names in order to disguise their former rank. The Tornaquinci divided into Popoleschi, Tornabuoni, Giachinotti, &c.; the Cavalcanti became Malatesti and Ciampoli; and others assumed fresh names.[1] Nevertheless, many proudly clung to their ancient appellations and titles; and when King Charles' son, the Prince of Salerno, was summoned to Naples from Provence, he halted in Florence by the way on purpose to imitate his father by creating new knights. By these artificial devices it was hoped to give new strength to an aristocracy that was doomed to decline by the natural course of events; but the means employed were too utterly opposed to the political and social temper of Florence to have the slightest success there. No longer fettered by Pope and emperor, and emancipated from the oppressive patronage of King Charles, who was now absorbed in Sicilian matters, the Florentines had organised the constitution in the manner that suited them best, and by entrusting the greater guilds with the management of the State gained a real predominance in Tuscany that they turned most skilfully to account for the extension of their trade. The politico-commercial league, concluded in March, 1282, to which we have already alluded, proved most beneficial to their interests, and the subjection of neighbouring towns and territories was another means to the same end.

Nevertheless, the two Ghibelline cities of Arezzo and Pisa still remained hostile to Florence. The former was a threatening presence in the upper Val d'Arno, while the latter, with its wealth, power, and command of the

[1] Villani, vii. 79; Ammirato, iii. pp. 288–90.

sea, was a danger to the lower valley, and, standing on the road to Leghorn and Porto Pisano, was an obstruction to the maritime trade of Florence. Hence it was obvious that sooner or later the Republic would be forced to combine with friendly neighbours and new allies against both these foes, and especially against Pisa. Free access to the sea-board was more indispensable than ever to the Florentine trade, and should Pisa continue to block the way, the Republic would reap nothing from the successes it had already achieved.

Meanwhile the Florentines enjoyed the benefits of peace for two quiet years. During this time Charles' son, the Prince of Salerno, and other members of the royal house were received in the city with all due pomp and parade. In March, 1283, the king came in person to Florence on his way to Bordeaux, where he was to engage in single combat with Peter of Aragon, who had been proclaimed Lord of Sicily by the people of the island. By this much-talked-of duel, that never took place, the war desolating Southern Italy was to be brought to an end. Even on this occasion the king, although noisily welcomed in Florence, and probably oppressed by grave anxiety, insisted on creating more knights, regardless of the trouble he caused to the people. Nevertheless, after he had gone, the merrymakings were continued with greater zest than before. On St. John's Day, always a great festival in Florence, a company was formed of a thousand young men, who, clothed in white robes and led by one of their number representing the "Lord of Love," [1] inaugurated games and diversions of every kind, giving dances in the streets and within doors to persons of all ranks—ladies, knights, and common folk. This Court of Love was in imitation of certain French customs first

[1] Villani says (vii. 89) that this "was the most noble and renowned *court* ever held in the city of Florence."

introduced into Florence by the Angevins. It now numbered three hundred knights, so-called *di corredo*, chiefly created by King Charles, according to the French mode. They gave banquets and had a train of pages, courtiers, and buffoons imported from various parts of Italy and France. But all this was a fruitless attempt to introduce customs opposed to the city's traditions, a childish means of asserting the existence of a new patrician order. The populace was enchanted with these gay doings; but the thriftier citizens at the head of the government, and constituting the real strength of the Republic, highly disapproved of them, and were disgusted to find that after struggling so long to repress the nobility fresh efforts were needed to stamp out its remains. Throughout Tuscany, indeed, fresh warfare was impending, for the Sicilian Vespers seemed to have roused the Imperialists to new vigour. For this reason Corso Donati had declared, at a *consulta* held on February 26, 1285, that all districts appertaining to the Empire (*de Imperio*) and bordering the Florentine territory were to be subject *ad iurisdictionem Comunis Florentiae*.[1] New agreements were made to this effect with the other Guelph cities.[2] But the most urgent consideration of all was how to overcome the pride and power of Pisa, that obstinately Ghibelline city with whom Florence had always been compelled to struggle, and must now struggle anew. But how was success to be assured? Florence was neither willing nor able to depend on the help of the French king, and even with the combined aid of all its allies could not muster sufficient strength for the enterprise. Therefore much sagacity and diplomatic skill were required in order to multiply the resources

[1] "Consulte," vol. i. pp. 169–70.

[2] Hartwig, "Ein menschenalter florentinische Geschichte" (1250–93), Freiburgi B., 1889–91, p. 111.

of the Republic, and the Florentines proved equal to the occasion.

VII.

Although the city of Pisa derived all its strength and influence from its maritime trade, nevertheless—either from being always on the Imperial side, or because such was the predestined fate of all Italian sea-board republics —it was dominated by a powerful aristocracy to the same extent as were Genoa and Venice. With their usual astuteness, the Florentines had long sought to bring their influence to bear on the Pisan nobles, in order to create discord among them. Giovanni Visconti, entitled Judge of Gallura, from the high and remunerative post once held by him in Sardinia, as governor of several provinces, for the Pisan Republic, had been subsequently (1274) exiled on account of his Guelph proclivities, and had then joined the vicar of King Charles and the Guelph League against his native state. He died in 1275; and just at that time Count Ugolino della Gherardesca, one of the most powerful and ambitious nobles of Pisa, who aspired to establish a despotism there, was driven into banishment with other formidable Guelphs (1275). These exiles not only made alliance with the Florentines, but, in conjunction with the League, or *Taglia*, made war on Pisa and captured several castles, Vico Pisano included. In the September of the same year they returned to the attack in co-operation with the Angevin vicar-royal, Florentines, and Lucchese, and, defeating their fellow-citizens at three miles' distance from Pisa, seized the Castle of Asciano, which was handed over to the Lucchese. In 1276 the war was resumed by Florence and Lucca, and again at the instigation of Count Ugolino and his friends. This was the occasion alluded to at an

earlier page, when both sides brought powerful armies into the field and came to a pitched battle between Pisa and Pontedera, on the banks of the so-called Fosso Arnonico, a canal into which the Pisans had formerly diverted the waters of the Arno for the better defence of their territory. Again the Pisans were worsted, and the bitterness of defeat enhanced by having to accept peace on the terms proposed by Florence, of which the first and hardest condition was the readmittance in their city of all the banished Guelphs, and particularly of the ambitious Count Ugolino, whom they hated so deeply.

Pope Gregory X. was highly displeased by this war, and by the ardour and pertinacity with which it was pursued, for he considered the Ghibelline spirit of Pisa a barrier to the growing power of the Florentines, who, in spite of being Guelphs, used every effort to become wholly independent of the Papacy. Wherefore, after vainly enjoining them to put an end to the war, he excommunicated their city. But the Florentines offered slight excuses, and until 1276 paid no attention to his thunders. Then at last peace was declared, but during its very brief duration plans were arranged for new expeditions.

After this the Republic of Pisa enjoyed a few tranquil years, and owing to the vastness of its trade and the extension of its colonies, its finances were rapidly restored to their former prosperity. Unfortunately, certain Pisan families had become so powerful by means of their wealth that, no longer satisfied with republican equality, they sought to dominate the internal affairs of the State and direct its foreign policy in favour of their personal ambition rather than of the interests of the State. The Judges of Gallura and Arborea, Counts Ugolino, Fazio, Neri, and Anselmo della Gherardesca, all had their own little courts and men-at-arms after the fashion of princes. Absorbed in covetous rivalries, they distracted the atten-

tion of the magistrates from the dangers threatening their republic, and daily becoming graver and more imminent. For, in fact, the strength of the Republic was not only almost exhausted by the continuous attacks of the Guelph League, but for some time past the rivalry of Genoa had been threatening to culminate in a still deadlier strife. As both these maritime cities were Ghibelline, they had every reason to be at peace with each other and combine in defending their interests against the far greater sea power of Venice. But, on the contrary, this only seemed to exasperate their reciprocal jealousy. Their fleets were constantly in collision in Levantine waters. They had a desperate encounter in 1277 near Constantinople and on the Black Sea. It ended in disaster for the Pisans, who had been the assailants, and from that moment they panted for revenge. Nor were opportunities lacking. While the Venetians were asserting absolute dominion over the Adriatic, the Genoese and Pisans, hard by on the Mediterranean, were always crossing each other's tracks, inasmuch as both were engaged in the same trading ventures, and both possessed colonies in the same islands of Corsica and Sardinia. Thus, they were involved in continual conflict. Then, too, as the Guelph League was specially hostile to Pisa, it supplied Genoa with perpetual pretexts for beginning the hostilities which the Florentines were seeking to incite by every political manœuvre. At last their reciprocal hatred reached so high a pitch that the Pisans themselves were the first to provoke the war. Their burning desire for reprisals was continually kept aflame by the greed of the nobles, who hoped to convert the conflict into a ladder to power, and whose own ambitions were spurred by the crafty encouragement of Florence.

Corsica was ruled by a certain Sinucello, bearing the title of Judge of Cinarca. He had been educated in

Pisa, and the Republic had assisted him to regain and increase his hereditary possessions in the island. Governing there as a vassal of Pisa, he nevertheless transferred his allegiance to the Genoese, who occupied another part of the island. Later on, after perpetrating every species of cruel and tyrannous deeds, he turned against the Genoese and devastated their Corsican towns. Taking refuge at Pisa, that republic granted him protection as a former vassal, equally regardless of the subsequent treaties, by which he had sworn fealty to Genoa, and of all the barbarities he had committed. Pisa tried to reinstate Sinucello in Corsica by force, but as the Genoese were determined to keep him at a distance, this served to provoke hostilities. In fact, being sent back to the island with 120 horse and 200 foot, he was able to recapture his possessions; but from that moment (1282) the Genoese and Pisan ships were always chasing one another over the Mediterranean in order to engage. Accordingly, from the end of 1282 to the August of 1283, a continual series of sanguinary conflicts took place, sometimes attaining the proportions of real naval battles; and although the Pisans were generally defeated, they always rallied their forces, and prepared to resume the struggle. On one occasion half their fleet perished in a storm; nevertheless, shortly after this (1284) they sent twenty-four galleys to escort Count Fazio to Sardinia, where collisions with the Genoese were of constant occurrence. In fact, on the 1st of May, they encountered the latter's fleet, gave battle, and carried on an obstinate fight that lasted the whole day. Finally, however, the Pisans were beaten off, leaving thirteen galleys and a great number of prisoners in the enemy's hands. Notwithstanding this reverse, the same year witnessed another naval battle between the two republics, that proved one of the most memorable fights on record in the Middle Ages.

Genoa, whose victories had cost her dear, caused vessels to be built and equipped in every port of the Riviera; while Pisa, although exhausted by so many conflicts on sea and land, made prodigious efforts of all kinds. By appealing to the patriotism of her noblest families, she elicited a worthy response. The Lanfranchi, a numerous Pisan clan, equipped no less than eleven galleys at their own expense; the Gualandi, Lei, and Gaetani, furnished six; the Sismondi three; the Orlandi four; the Upezzinghi five; the Visconti three; the Moschi two; and other families joined in equipping one. Andrea Morosini, the Venetian, one of the highest naval celebrities of the time, was chosen Podestà, with full powers to make all requisite preparations for the war, and to then assume the chief command of the fleet at sea. Thus both sides sent forth the most formidable armaments to be seen in those times. Genoese writers reckon their vessels to have been ninety-six in number, and those of Pisa seventy-two; whereas Pisan historians reckon their fleet at 103 sail against 130 of the Genoese. At any rate, both are agreed that the Genoese fleet outnumbered the Pisan, and that its superiority was enhanced by the greater skill of its commanders. The two armadas cruised in search of each other for some time, and then tacked about before giving battle, each trying to gain the better position. It is averred that the Pisans sailed to the entrance of the port of Genoa, discharging silver arrows and balls covered with purple cloth, in order to make a display of wealth, after the usage of the time. Anyhow, it is known that some of their galleys were anchored off Porto Pisano, and others lying in the Arno, between the two bridges of the city, when the news came that the Genoese fleet had been sighted. All Pisa was in a turmoil; scattered crews hastened on board, and the archbishop, attended by his clergy, and bearing the banner of the Republic, appeared on the Ponte

Vecchio, and blessed the fleet. Thereupon, amid joyful shouts, the galleys weighed anchor, and swept down the river to the sea. It is related that at the moment the benediction was pronounced the crucifix on the standard fell down, which was judged a bad omen.

The 6th of August, 1284, was a memorable day. The two fleets met off Meloria, at a short distance from Porto Pisano. Here in past times the Genoese had been severely defeated by the Pisans, and here they now sought revenge in the famous battle so fully recorded by our historians. The remoteness of the event, and the discrepancies between Tuscan and Genoese accounts, make it very difficult to obtain absolute knowledge of all the details of this fight. Accordingly it will be safer to fix our attention on the best ascertained and more remarkable points.

The Pisan fleet consisted of three squadrons. Of these, Admiral Andrea Morosini commanded the first; while the second was under Count Ugolino, who, in spite of his courage, was no trustworthy leader, on account of the devouring personal ambition urging him to subordinate the interests of the State to his own greed for power. The third was commanded by Andreotto Saracini. Oberto Doria, an officer of great courage and experience, was high admiral of the Genoese fleet. As it first hove in sight, this armada seemed no greater than that of the Pisans, but only because a reserve of thirty galleys, commanded by Benedetto Zaccaria, lay hidden behind Meloria —or, according to other accounts, behind Montenero— ready to join in the fight when required. Soon after midday the battle began, and raged for some hours without any decisive result. But when the two flag-ships met, both fleets closed in a general engagement. On either side vast numbers of combatants, killed, wounded, or stunned, were hurled into the sea. The waves were

crimsoned with blood; drowning men clutched at oars to save their lives, but were relentlessly thrust under by the rowers' next strokes, owing to the impossibility of checking the manœuvres in the thick of the fight, and at the most critical moment. Just then Benedetto Zaccaria, having been signalled for, hove in sight, full sail, and with sweeping oars, in time to decide the fate of the day. Seeing him draw near, the Pisans knew they were outnumbered, and their courage began to fail, although they continued the fight with undiminished ardour. As Zaccaria dashed in, he contrived to bring his galley alongside Doria's, so as to wedge Morosini, whose flag-ship was making a gallant defence. At the same time the galley bearing the Pisan standard was also surrounded by the foe. On all sides the sudden arrival of the reserve squadron had given fresh courage to the Genoese and diminished the hopes of Pisa. The struggle was now too unequal; nevertheless, both sides were unwilling to end it, for each bitter enemy was seeking to destroy not only the other's fleet, but the very life of the rival Republic.

But the conflict could not go on for ever. The Pisan banner, on its tall iron shaft, was suddenly seen to bend, and the next instant it fell with a horrible crash beneath a storm of blows, while at the same moment the admiral's flag-ship began to give way, and Morosini, who had been shockingly wounded in the face, was forced to surrender. At this juncture Count Ugolino, for his own treasonable purposes, gave the signal for flight, and thus completed the catastrophe. Seven Pisan galleys were sunk, twenty-eight captured by the foe, while, according to the inscription on the Church of St. Matteo at Genoa, no less than 9,272 prisoners were taken. Certain Pisan writers raise the number to eleven, and some even to fifteen thousand; but this may have included many of the slain, who may

undoubtedly be reckoned at five thousand. At all events, after the battle of Meloria, it became a common saying in Tuscany that one must now go to Genoa in order to see Pisa.

When those who had escaped returned to Pisa, all the town flocked into the streets to ask news of their kindred, and nearly all had to mourn the loss of some killed or captured relations. A host of old men, women, and children wandered about the city maddened with despair, so that at last the magistrates were forced to ordain that all should keep to their own homes. Soon all the inhabitants were clad in black, and only women were seen in the streets. Genoa, on the contrary, rejoiced and made glad; but victory had no wise softened its hatred against Pisa. This was proved when the fate of the prisoners came to be discussed. Some citizens proposed putting them to a heavy ransom; others to exchange them for the Castel di Castro in Sardinia, the key of the Pisan possessions there; but neither suggestion was approved. Orators raised their voices, crying that it were best to retain the prisoners until the war should be really at an end. Thus the women, being practically widowed, but unable to re-marry, population would be checked, and the Pisan army prevented from repairing its losses. In fact, the war continued sixteen years longer; and by the time the prisoners were released, their number was reduced to one thousand and odd, all the rest having succumbed to disease, old age, injuries, or hardships.

VIII.

It is difficult to decide which rose to greater proportions during these years—the heroic endurance of calamity on the

part of the Pisans, or the insatiable hatred of their victors. Soon after the catastrophe of Meloria, Florence and Lucca proposed an alliance with Genoa, in order to join that power in completing the extermination of the rival republic. This alliance was to be maintained for twenty-five years from the conclusion of the war. Hostilities were to commence within fifteen days, Genoa being pledged to provide fifty galleys, and Florence and Lucca to furnish an army. Thus the allies could make combined attacks by sea and by land, and were bound to carry on the campaign for at least forty days every year. Pisa understood that her total overthrow was decreed, and her detestation of Lucca, and still more of Florence, was so keen that, to avoid yielding to those states, she professed her readiness to accept instead the terms of submission Genoa had sought to impose. But it was now too late. On the 13th of October the treaty of alliance was subscribed, in the Badia at Florence, by delegates from Lucca and Genoa, together with the representatives of Florence, of whom Brunetto Latini was one. An arrangement was also made allowing the other Tuscan cities to join the League, and, what was far more remarkable, another clause provided for the admission of Pisan prisoners of influential position who should have sworn to make war on their own state. Even Count Ugolino, his sons, and the Judge of Gallura, were to be admitted on the same terms, provided they became Genoese citizens and acknowledged the suzerainty of Genoa over their estates. Nevertheless, no prisoners were to be admitted without the general consent of the allies, and were not to exceed twenty in number. This clause clearly proves that many Pisans were traitorous, or disposed to treason. Nor was Florence forgetful of the aim she had constantly in view; for even on this occasion she took care to insert

profitable commercial agreements in the treaty of political alliance.[1]

Several other cities of Tuscany speedily adhered to the League, and preparations for war began. Pisa was soon surrounded on all sides. The Florentines marched into Val d'Era, the Lucchese captured several castles, while Spinola's Genoese squadron attacked Porto Pisano and wrought much damage there. Suddenly, however, the Florentines showed so much slackness in lending their aid, as to excite the grave discontent of Lucca and Genoa. Their chief object was to promote their own commerce; hence, while anxious to break Pisa's pride, and reduce the city to submission on the plan pursued with other Tuscan towns, it did not suit their views to let the Genoese usurp the chief share of the work, much less the lion's share of the profit. Yet, as things stood, the latter's naval superiority rendered this result only too certain. For, were Genoa once mistress of Pisa, the Mediterranean would be practically hers, and, with so much increased power, would be truly formidable to Florence.

Accordingly, after raising such a host of enemies against Pisa, the Florentines now tried to turn things to their own exclusive advantage, and, with the usual double dealing of the period, paid little respect to the treaties they had sworn to observe. The Pisans instantly saw their opportunity and sought to profit by it; but in so bungling a fashion as to hasten their ruin. As we have already related, they had vainly attempted to come to terms with Genoa; and, their grievous calamities rendering them unable to cope with assailants equally formidable by land and by sea, they now made endeavours to conciliate Florence. For this

[1] Ammirato gives full details of this treaty. A summary of the original document was afterwards included by Canale, in his "Nuova Istoria della Repubblica di Genova" (the Le Monnier edition), vol. iii. p. 34.

purpose they nominated Count Ugolino to the office or Podestà, and even entrusted him subsequently with the direction of the war, in spite of the general belief that he had played the traitor at Meloria. For, knowing him to be Guelph, and secretly favourable to the Florentines, they considered him fitted to fulfil their purpose of detaching the latter from the Genoese interests. They knew, also, that the count was absorbed in the single idea of establishing his own domination in Pisa; therefore he would be ready to come to terms, if required, with the enemies of his country, and be capable of the worst crimes in order to gratify his enormous ambition. But, this ambition once sated, the Pisans believed that, possessing many friends among the Guelphs, his courage and astuteness would enable him to arrange satisfactory terms. This proved to be the case, but his intervention led to very unexpected results.

The chroniclers relate that Ugolino sent the rectors of Florence a present of Vernaccia wine, with gold florins at the bottom of every flask as a bribe.[1] This legend merely signifies that he was considered capable of employing any means to attain his own ends. At all events, he was obliged to impose very cruel sacrifices on Pisa before the Florentines could be induced to suspend hostilities. It was necessary to cede important domains, castles such as Sta Maria a Monte, Fucecchio, Sta Croce, and Monte Calvoli, and to restore the city to the Guelphs by banishing all the Ghibellines—the direst humiliation to a republic that had always been steadfastly Ghibelline. But, with her very existence at stake, Pisa was bound to submit even to this.

When, however, the Genoese and Lucchese discovered that the Florentines had deserted them and were siding with Pisa against Lucca, they complained so bitterly of this breach of faith, that Count Ugolino deemed it

[1] Villani, vii. 98; Malespini, ccxliii.

well to at least silence Lucca by the cession of Bientina, Ripafratta, and Viareggio. In this manner the haughty Pisan Republic was stripped of nearly all its territories outside the city gates, and deprived of all power of defending the coast, at a time when its ships were being chased and plundered by the Genoese on every sea Amid the general ruin and desolation, however, Ugolino triumphed; for now, being absolute lord of Pisa, his dearest desire was fulfilled. Nevertheless, his power was much less secure than he supposed, for the fiery Pisan spirit was not entirely extinguished, and already the majority of the citizens were growing intolerant of a tyranny at home failing to spare them humiliations abroad. The smallest occasion served to show that public feeling was on the verge of an outbreak.

Much discontent was also provoked in the course of negotiations with Genoa for the restitution of the prisoners, comprising many of Pisa's best sons. Their release was desired at any cost; but the count, knowing them to be Ghibellines, and consequently opposed to himself, daily invented fresh obstacles to prevent their return, and by proposing terms the Pisans could not accept, always caused fresh delays. Thus, as he intended, no conclusion could be arrived at. But his arrogance finally produced discord even among his own party. His nephew, Nino Visconti, judge of Gallura, and the natural head of the Guelph faction, began to make overtures to the Ghibellines for the purpose of combating his uncle. Thereupon Ugolino promptly sent many other Ghibellines into exile, and demolished ten of their grandest palaces. This produced an outburst of indignation. Nino made close alliance with the Gualandi and Sismondi, and all tried to hasten the prisoners' release, while the count found fresh pretexts for delay by reviving causes of dispute with Genoa.

After vain attempts to rouse the people against him, Nino and his friends resorted to legal measures, hoping in this way to curb his tyrannous excesses. He had been nominated Captain-general of the people, but had illegally usurped the office of Podestà in addition, and fixed his residence in the palace of the Signory, where he had no right to dwell. His nephew and the others sued him for this before the *Anziani*, and obliged him to leave the palace in conformity with the law. He obeyed for a short time, but soon resumed his former supremacy by force. Meanwhile, party hatred grew stronger, the count fomenting discord with Genoa, while his enemies, as another means to his overthrow, were doing their utmost to conclude peace and deliver the prisoners.

At last the count discerned his peril, and tried to find some way of escape. Seeing that certain Guelphs were no less hostile than the Ghibellines and had joined with them against him, he decided on conciliating the latter, in order to detach them from the Guelphs who had forsaken his cause. Thus he might at once defeat these deserters, and, having isolated the Ghibellines, find it easy to destroy them later on.

But, in spite of these ingenious devices, both parties finally combined against him, under the command of Archbishop Ruggiero, one of the most powerful of the Ghibellines. Civil war raged in the city; the public palace was alternately seized by the archbishop, and re-captured by the count; while the latter, blinded by his fury for revenge, rejected the warnings and advice of even his closest adherents. One day, when the popular discontent had come to a climax, in consequence of the high price of provisions, and no one ventured to inform him of it, one of his nephews demanded audience, explained the state of things, and advised him to suspend the levying of customs, so as to lower the price of food. But this enraged the

count to such a point that, drawing his dagger, he stabbed the speaker in the arm. A nephew of the archbishop chanced to be present, and being a friend of the wounded man, rushed forward to shield him from further attack. Thereupon the count, maddened with fury, caught up an axe that lay near, and with one blow stretched the intruder dead at his feet.

The Archbishop Ruggieri dissimulated for a while, waiting his chance to take revenge. It came at last. On July 1, 1288, the council of the Republic was assembled in the Church of St. Sebastian to discuss the arrangement of peace with Genoa. Both the Ghibellines and people yearned for peace at any cost; but the count raised fresh obstacles, still relying on the support of his friends. As the meeting dispersed, the archbishop perceived that the favourable moment had arrived, and that no time must be lost. The Gualandi, Sismondi, Lanfranchi and other houses joined with him, and all proceeded to attack Ugolino. The latter made a valiant resistance, aided by two of his sons, two nephews, and a few devoted followers. After the first encounter, in which Ugolino's natural son was slain before his eyes, he took refuge in the palace of the people, and defended it from midday to dusk, when the besiegers decided to set it on fire. Then, forcing their way through the flames, they captured the count, with his two younger sons, Gaddo and Uguccione, and his nephews Nino, surnamed Brigata, and Anselmuccio. The prisoners were thrown into the Gualandi tower on the Piazza degli Anziani, and Ruggieri kept them most closely confined there for several months.[1] Finally the key of the tower was cast into the Arno, and all left to die of starvation, amid the torments immortalised by Dante's pen.[2]

[1] Some of the chroniclers assert that the archbishop hoped to extract large sums of money from his captives before making an end of them.

[2] For details of the Pisan war with Genoa and Florence, *vide* "Storie e Cronache Pisane," edited by Bonaini and others in vol. vi. (pts. i. and

IX.

These events, while still further reducing the strength of the unfortunate city, likewise caused the overthrow of the Pisan Guelphs, by once more driving them into exile, and promoted the hopes of the Ghibellines, who now seemed to have gained new life in Tuscany. Accordingly Florence was again compelled to recur to arms. Charles I. of Anjou was no more, and Pope Honorius, being favourable to the Ghibellines, had instigated his kinsman, Prenzivalle del Fiesco, to assume the post of vicar-imperial in Tuscany. But as the cities of the League gave him a very rough reception, he retired to Arezzo, and vainly promulgated edicts against the Guelphs. By this time no one heeded the words of Imperial vicars. On realising this he went back to Germany, leaving Arezzo a prey to conflicts, in which the Ghibellines won the victory, with the help of numerous Florentine exiles. The Guelphs sought refuge in neighbouring castles, whither reinforcements reached them from the Florentine Signory. Thus the war spread even to the Upper Val d'Arno; for as the Ghibellines had returned to power, both in Arezzo and Pisa, led by the archbishop of either town, they had now to be encountered on two sides. Their chief in Pisa was Ruggieri degli Ubaldini, in Arezzo Guglielmo degli Ubertini, an equally Ghibelline prelate. The latter was also a better warrior than priest, the lord of many strongholds, and being of a very slippery nature, first attempted to betray the city to the Florentines, in return for an agreement guaranteeing him his possessions. The men of Arezzo contrived, however, to compel him to keep faith with his own party. On June 1, 1288, the army of

ii.) of the "Archivio Storico Italiano"; Canale, "Nuova Istoria della Repubblica di Genova"; Villani; Flaminio dal Borgo; Muratori Script., vol. xv.; Sismondi; "Hist. des Rep. It.," T. ii. chap. 8.

the League took the field. It comprised nobles and *popolani* from every part of Tuscany, and together with the mercenary troops reached a total of 2,600 horse and 12,000 foot. They carried on the campaign for twenty-two days, capturing and razing about forty castles, great and small, on the Aretine territory; but then a great storm wrought so much damage to their encampments, that they were forced to beat a retreat. As a mark of insult to the enemy, they had held races under the walls of Arezzo, naming twelve knights *di corredo;* [1] but then, raising the siege, they went back to Florence, leaving their foes unconquered and undismayed. In fact, when the Siennese separated from the main body on the way to their own city, they were surprised by a band of Aretines in ambush, and thoroughly routed.

During the month of August the Florentines joined with the Pisan Guelph exile, Nino di Gallura, made raids on Pisan lands, and occupied the Castle of Asciano; then, in September, they marched against the Aretines, who had now gathered an army of seven hundred horse and eight thousand foot. No pitched battle, however, took place, for the enemy retreated before the Florentines, leaving them to devastate the country at their will, but afterwards made reprisal in the beginning of 1289, by laying waste the Florentine territory, and penetrating almost as far as San Donato. These variously important skirmishes paved the way for more serious hostilities.

All Tuscany was now preparing for war. The captain elected by Pisa was Count Guido da Montefeltro, who had risen to the highest distinction by his victory over the French troops of Charles of Anjou at the battle of Forlì. He was undoubtedly one of the bravest warriors of the time, and on his arrival in Pisa quickly reorganised the militia, and created a new body of light infantry of three

[1] An order of knighthood limited to the nobility.

thousand crossbowmen, able to do good service against the heavy cavalry then considered the chief strength of an army. On the other hand, the Aretines increased their forces so much, that when Charles II. of Anjou passed through Florence on the way to his coronation in Naples, the Florentines were obliged to grant him an escort of their best horse and foot soldiers, to protect him from the attack threatened by the men of Arezzo. On this occasion they asked the king for a good leader, to enable them to pursue the campaign energetically, and Amerigo de Narbonne being appointed to the post, he joined them, accompanied by William de Durfort and one hundred men-at-arms.

On June 2, 1289, the new captain, Narbonne, took the field with an army of one thousand horse and ten thousand foot soldiers of the League. It comprised the flower of the Florentine nobles and commons, including six hundred of the best-equipped knights ever furnished by the city. Prato, Pistoia, Sienna, and all the allies, including the Guelphs of Romagna, had sent their due contingents. Meanwhile the Aretines had collected all the Ghibellines from neighbouring cities, and were encamped at Bibbiena with eight hundred horse and eight thousand foot, under the command of their captains, the greatest of whom was the daring Archbishop Guglielmo degli Ubertini. On finding that he could not make terms with Florence to secure his own strongholds, without being exposed to the vengeance of the Aretines, he had plunged into the war with youthful ardour. His conduct was arrogant and full of assurance; for he relied on his own courage and that of his men, and despised the Florentines, because, so he said, they were as sleek as womenfolk.

On the 11th of June the two armies met in the plain of Poppi, near Campaldino, where the engagement began. The battle is known by that name, and rendered all the

more celebrated by the fact of Dante Alighieri—then young and unknown—having fought in it. The Florentines had placed a mixed host of infantry, crossbowmen, and bucklermen in the van, and their wings were formed of 150 skirmishing light horse, who were all picked men. Vieri de' Cerchi was among the latter; for, having been entrusted with the choice of those of his *sestiere*, he insisted, in spite of illness, on accompanying his son and nephews to the battlefield. In the rear of the first division a stronger force of heavy cavalry and infantry was drawn up, with the baggage-train behind. Corso Donati led a band of about 250 foot and horse from Lucca, Pistoia, and foreign parts. He was Podestà of Pistoia at the time, and was directed to hold his reserve back until the commander-in-chief gave the signal to advance. On either side there was a fever of emulation between the Guelphs and the Ghibellines, and to gratify the ambition of their respective leaders, some were awarded the honour of knighthood that day, in order to spur them to greater feats. The Florentines were under orders to await the enemy's charge, and Messer Simone dei Mangiadori of San Miniato shouted to his men, "Signori! our Tuscan battles used to be won by vigorous assault, but are now to be won by standing still." The Aretines, on the contrary, trusting to their own courage and their leader's skill, made so impetuous a charge to the cry of "*Viva San Donato!*" that the Florentine army wavered, and gave way before the shock. Nearly all the light horse were hurled from their saddles, and the main body fell back. But the foot soldiers flanking the second corps moved forward to the cry of "*Narbona cavaliere!*" and by threatening to surround the enemy, checked its advance, and thus gave their comrades time to re-form. Count Guido Novello, in command of 150 Aretine mounted skirmishers, lost his

presence of mind, and by failing to attack the foe at the moment when their ranks were in confusion, caused much harm by the delay. But this was his usual behaviour, and presently, as the fight grew hotter, he took to flight—also as usual. On the other hand, Corso Donati, although instructed to keep his men steady, and not to advance until expressly summoned, could not remain inert on beholding the Florentines waver at the first shock of encounter, and cried aloud, "If we lose, I will perish with my fellow-citizens; if we win, let who likes come to Pistoia to punish our disobedience;" and so saying, gave the command to take the enemy in flank. Thus the attacking Aretines were now charged in their turn. They made an admirable resistance, and their cavalry being insufficient, the infantry crawled on all fours among the advancing troops, and disembowelled their steeds. But no prodigies of personal courage could avail to decide the battle. There was a fierce and prolonged mêlée; the Florentines fought stubbornly, and nearly all the leaders of the Aretines were killed. Archbishop Ubertini fell, sword in hand; so, too, his nephew, Guglielmino dei Pazzi, held to be one of the bravest captains in Italy, and Buonconte, the Count of Montefeltro's son. Many Florentines perished, including three of the Uberti and one of the Abbati. Count Guido Novello alone saved his skin by flight. The Aretines were thoroughly routed, and, according to Villani, left seventeen hundred dead on the field, and two thousand prisoners in the enemy's hands. But of these only 740 reached Florence, the rest having escaped or been ransomed. This is not very surprising, when we remember that in these Guelph and Ghibelline wars fellow-citizens, and old friends or relations, often had to meet in combat; and that consequently leniency was more natural than hatred, although there are only too many

instances of the ferocity to which the latter feeling was carried. The Florentine losses were slight and unimportant. Corso Donati, whose daring charge greatly contributed to decide the struggle, and Vieri de' Cerchi were both covered with glory. Many men previously deemed of little account won high reputation that day, while many others forfeited their fame. At any rate, all the best citizens and captains returned safely to Florence, and there was general rejoicing in the city.[1]

The Florentines had felt assured of victory from the outset. In fact we are told that the priors, having fallen asleep on the day of the battle, worn out by their previous vigils, they were suddenly awakened by the sound of a voice seeming to cry : "Arise, for the Aretines are beaten." At that moment all the citizens were in the streets, waiting impatiently the arrival of news. At last the desired messenger appeared, and there was an outburst of joy and festivity. Later on discontent was excited by hearing that the army had failed to follow up the victory by giving pursuit to the foe. For had the latter been driven back into Arezzo, that town might have been easily seized. Instead of this, the forces captured Bibbiena, belonging to the bishop, plundered several castles, and devastated the country for twenty days. They ran races round the walls of Arezzo, and used their rams to drop asses crowned with mitres into the town, in order to insult its inhabitants. But they suspended all serious hostilities for the time, although, when the new priors had been chosen, the government at once despatched two of them to the camp, in order to push forward the war in person, and hasten the capture of the city. But the favourable moment had passed, for the Aretines made some successful sallies, and set fire to all the besiegers' engines of assault. Accordingly, leaving a sufficient force

[1] G. Villani, Dino Compagni, and the other Florentine chroniclers.

to guard the captured castles and unfinished siege-works, the Florentines returned home on the 23rd of July, much to the displeasure of the citizens, who murmured that the enemy's gold must have been poured into the camp. Nevertheless, a great victory had been won, and the soldiers were received with vast demonstrations of delight. All the people, with the banners and insignia of every guild, and the whole of the clergy, went forth in procession to welcome the conquerors. The Captain, Amerigo de Narbonne, and Ugolino de' Rossi, the Podestà, entered the town in state, beneath sumptuous canopies of cloth of gold, borne by the noblest of Florentine knights. The entire cost of the campaign was paid by levying a property tax of six *lire*, six *soldi* per cent. in the city and its territory. This tax soon yielded a product of thirty-six thousand gold florins, owing, as Villani remarks (vii. 132), to the admirable administration and organisation of the financial affairs of the Commune at that time.

After humiliating the two hostile cities of Arezzo and Pisa, the Florentine Republic had overthrown the Ghibellines and assured the triumph of the Guelphs throughout Tuscany, and thus gained almost unlimited influence, both political and commercial. Hence there was a vast and rapid increase of prosperity. Great festivities and banquets were held in all the wealthiest houses, and palace courtyards, covered with silken canopies and draped with gorgeous stuffs, served as places of entertainment for the citizens. In token of rejoicing the womenfolk paraded the streets wearing garlands of flowers. Nevertheless, there was a general wish to continue the war, in the hope of completing the overthrow of the two most powerful Ghibelline cities. This, however, was no easy task.

In 1289 there were fresh skirmishes between the Guelphs and Ghibellines, although none of any importance. The Florentines made several attempts to capture Arezzo by

force and by fraud, but always in vain. In November they had contrived a secret arrangement by means of which it was hoped to surprise the city. A decree was suddenly issued summoning all able-bodied men to assemble outside the walls before a candle lighted at one of the gates should have time to burn down. The army thus hastily gathered made a forced march on Arezzo ; but the treason plotted there had been already discovered : a dying man, rumour said, having revealed it to his confessor. At any rate, the army was obliged to withdraw from a bootless errand.

In the June of the ensuing year, 1290, the Florentines resumed the campaign with an army of 1,500 horse and 6,000 foot, furnished by the League. Surrounding Arezzo, they devastated the territory within a circuit of six miles, for the space of twenty-nine days, but without achieving any farther result. At that period all cities were fortified, and before the invention of gunpowder siege operations had no chance of success, save by treason, against a resolute defence. Now, too, the Florentines were trying to carry on a double campaign, against Arezzo on the one hand and Pisa on the other. In fact, presently leaving three hundred horse and a considerable number of foot soldiers to garrison the neighbouring strongholds, they transferred the rest of the army from the Upper to the Lower Val d'Arno, to act against Pisa.

In the preceding year, aided by Florence and the League, Lucca had taken the field with four hundred horse and two thousand foot, in order to carry on the war with Pisa, while the Florentines were busied with Arezzo. This force encamped before Pisa, and, according to usage, held races there; harried the territory for twenty-five days, captured the Castle of Caprona, and made several assaults on Vico Pisano, but achieved no farther result. Now, in 1290, the Florentines resumed the attack in com-

bination with all the great forces of the League. And while this army was making a general attack by land, the Genoese fleet swooped down on the coast with deadly effect. Leghorn and Porto Pisano were taken, the four towers guarding the harbour were thrown into the sea, and the Meloria lighthouse destroyed in the same way, together with its keepers. Before setting sail the Genoese blocked the mouth of the harbour by sinking four ships laden with ballast, and demolished all warehouses and palaces. But the havoc wrought by land was confined to the destruction of crops and the demolition of petty strongholds. Meanwhile the Pisans made a brave resistance on all sides. Guido di Montefeltro, their captain, used his newly invented troop of light horse to excellent effect against the Tuscan infantry of the League and the heavy cavalry in its pay. By his successful sallies he repeatedly achieved a bloody revenge for past losses. In December, 1291, the Pisans marched on the Castle of Pontedera, and finding it slackly defended, accomplished its capture, and shortly afterwards stirred the Castle of Vignale to revolt against San Miniato. Thereupon the Florentines decided on sending an army to provoke a fresh engagement; but the expedition was too long delayed, and the troops had hardly started before torrents of rain inundated the country and compelled them to retreat.

Military operations now slackened more and more, for mischief was brewing in the city, and all men foresaw that worse troubles were at hand. Therefore, although urged to resume hostilities by their valiant and energetic leader, the Judge of Gallura, the Florentines so sorely needed tranquillity that they finally concluded a treaty of peace at Fucecchio on June 12, 1293. According to its stipulations, all prisoners of war were to be released; no duties were to be levied on inhabitants of the communes of the League in passing through Pisa, nor on Pisans

passing through the said communes. The office of Podestà or Captain of Pisa was only to be held by a member of the League, and it was expressly forbidden to confer that post on any rebel or adversary of the said League, or any scion of the Montefeltro house. Further, Count Guido, the brave chief who had shown so much energy and daring in defence of the Pisan Republic, was to be dismissed, together with all the foreign Ghibellines; and twenty-five citizens of the best Pisan blood were to be given in hostage to secure the due observance of the terms. Such was the reward of the veteran leader's fidelity and heroism! On being paid off, he entered the council chamber, and after reproving the ingratitude of the Pisans in dignified words, took his leave without expressing any wish for revenge. Yet, being still in command of an experienced army devoted to himself, vengeance lay in his power, had he chosen to follow the fashion of the times. Another clause of the treaty provided that the descendants of Count Ugolino and the Judge of Gallura should be freed from outlawry and reinstated in all their possessions.[1]

X.

From this moment the Florentines devoted their chief attention to the affairs of the city, although these had not been altogether neglected, even during the last wars. Continual improvements had been made in the administration of the Republic, and in many respects it was a model administration, while there was also a notable increase of commerce, trade, and wealth. At the same time many public works had been completed under the direction of the famous architect Arnolfo di Cambio, the creator of

[1] Villani, Compagni, Ammirato, and the Pisan historians previously quoted.

some of the grandest public buildings in Florence. He planned the alterations for the enlargement of the city, first undertaken in 1285, and afterwards built the third circuit of walls, the which work was also superintended by the celebrated chronicler Giovanni Villani. It was likewise by Arnolfo's care that the Loggia of Or' San Michele, then used as a corn market, was built in and paved, the Piazza dei Signori supplied with a pavement, and the Badia embellished and restored. Folco Portinari, the father of Dante's Beatrice, founded, at his own expense, the church and hospital of Santa Maria Nuova. The Piazza of Santa Maria Novella was laid out, and many other public works of a similar kind were begun.[1]

Meanwhile political reforms were uninterruptedly carried on, and among them the notable measure passed in 1289, reducing the Podestà's term of office from twelve to six months.[2] The post was then conferred on Rosso Gabrielli of Gubbio, a city supplying many Podestàs and Captains of the people not only to Florence, but to all parts of Italy. At that period Romagna, Umbria, and the Marches seemed to be a nursery of these dignitaries, the inhabitants of those provinces being not only well trained to arms, as is proved by the horde of captains and soldiers of adventure they sent forth, but also well versed in the legal lore of the neighbouring university of Bologna. This reduction to six months of the Podestà's tenure of office was not long maintained, but had been decreed for the same motives as the change of Signory every two months. The power of a magistrate authorised to administer justice, in command of the army and invariably escorted by a body of armed followers in his private pay, might be easily transformed into a formidable despotism,

[1] Villani, vii. 99; Vasari, "Vita di Arnolfo"; Ammirato (Florence: Batelli and Co., 1846), vol. i. pp. 310–11.

[2] Ammirato, vol. i. p. 337.

as several Italian republics had already found to their cost. Hence it was endeavoured to avert this danger from Florence by changing the magistrates so frequently as to allow no time for hatching plots against the Commonwealth, or forming a party whose adherence could be counted on for any length of time.

But political and social changes of a very different and far graver kind were now brewing among the citizens of Florence. Signs of a new and radical transformation were becoming daily more pronounced ; hence the greater need of assuring peace in order to withstand the inevitable and imminent shock of coming revolutions. The presence of the Angevins in Florence, the example set by their nobles, and their continual creation of new knights, had swelled the arrogance of the leading Guelphs to a boundless extent. These patricians were now known by the name of *grandi*, and in imitation of the French nobility assumed manners ill-suited to a republican state, trying to rule everything and all men according to their will. A serious riot took place in 1287, because one of these chieftains, named Totto Mazzinghi, being condemned to death by the Podestà for murder and other crimes, Messer Corco Donati, one of the leading nobles of Florence, attempted to rescue him by force on the way to the scaffold. Thereupon the Podestà, resenting such open violation of the law, caused the alarm bell to be rung. The people flocked to the place of execution sword in hand, some mounted, some on foot, to the cry of "*Giustizia, Giustizia!*" and the sentence was then carried out with the uttermost rigour of the law. The condemned Mazzinghi was dragged through the streets before being hung ; the promoters of the revolt against the magistrates were heavily fined, and order was re-established in the city. But these disturbances were indicative of deeper evils to come, and Florentine statesmen were

full of anxiety. In order to check the arrogance of the *grandi*, and prevent them from combining with the populace, the middle-class Guelphs began to grant political rights on a continuously wider scale, while restricting the power of the nobles. As we have already seen, the latter had been obliged to provide sureties personally responsible for their actions, to swear to abstain from deeds of vengeance, from oppressing the people and so forth. The very remarkable law passed on August 6, 1289, served to overthrow the might of the nobles, both within and without the city walls, and to enhance that of the people by destroying the last lingering remains of the feudal system. Thanks to this decree, serfdom was entirely abolished throughout the territory; for in terms resembling a proclamation of the rights of man, it declared liberty to be an imprescriptible, natural right, a right never to be dependent on another's will; and that the Republic was determined not only to maintain liberty intact throughout its dominions, but likewise increase the same.[1] Thus every species of bondage, whether for a term or for life, was abolished, together with all contracts or agreements infringing on the liberty of the individual.

It has been thought by some writers that the Commune of Bŏlogna had already achieved this most important reform in 1256, and that Florence only followed its example thirty-three years later. But this was an error induced by supposing that in the Italian communes the abolition of serfdom was completed at one stroke, whereas, on the contrary, it was carried out very slowly and in different degrees. In the territory there were not only *nobles* and their *serfs*, but also *fideles*, whose personality was already recognised by law, but who still remained dependents of the *nobiles* and bound to yield them service and tribute. At a later date the condition of the *fideles*

[1] *Vide* Note A at the end of this chapter.

was further ameliorated ; they could hold land in fee from their lords, or by payment of a yearly rent (a *livello*), but remained bound to them on terms of villeinage, and therefore bound to the soil. For this reason the lords believed, or feigned to believe themselves entitled to sell the soil, together with the *fideles* attached to it, even when this was no longer in accordance with the spirit of the law. The Bolognese abolished serfdom in 1256, but the peasantry remained in their master's dependence, that is, more or less as *fideles*, and although these conditions were ameliorated in 1283 they were not altogether abrogated. But even earlier than 1289 serfs had ceased to exist in the Florentine territory, and, judicially, the *fideles* had been long considered almost independent of their masters, although the latter, by the abuse of purely personal contracts, often compelled them to remain attached to the soil and claimed the right of disposing of them, as well as of the land. These were the abuses condemned and suppressed by the Florentines in 1289, as being adverse to liberty, "the which is a natural and therefore inalienable right." The new law likewise decreed that in consequence of this natural right all the above-mentioned sales became null and void ; and cancelling every illegal contract, it finally guaranteed complete freedom to the peasantry. And by another clause every peasant was thenceforth enabled (irrespective of any sale of the land) to purchase his emancipation from any personal contract binding him to the proprietor of the soil. Thus the law of 1289 did not abolish serfdom, inasmuch as that institution had been already suppressed by the Florentines some time before, but it assured, for the first time, complete liberty to the cultivators of the soil. Economically, the new law was very advantageous to the Commune, by converting the peasantry into direct contributors, and no less advantageous to the democracy, inasmuch as it broke the last links of

the feudal system, and weakened the power of the nobles throughout the *contado*.[1]

Many other measures were also passed in 1289 and 1290 for the purpose of strengthening the position of the people in the city, and serving to show that Florence steadily pursued the work of political and social transformation. First of all, the number of legally constituted guilds was increased by adding five more to the seven greater guilds, and all having their special insignia, organisation, arms, and political attributes.[2] We now find records of twelve greater guilds in the archives of the Republic, whereas, previously to this date, seven only were mentioned. It is true that the number was very soon reduced again to seven; but then the five omitted were joined to nine others, these fourteen designated as the lesser guilds, and the total number of the guilds was finally fixed at twenty one. In 1290 another law was passed, called *the law of prohibition*, decreeing that no prior could be re-elected to office until three years had elapsed. Later on this prohibition was partially extended even to the kinsmen of a prior.[3] The scope of these measures was always to prevent the rise of any future tyranny and to keep the growing arrogance of the nobles in check.

Other laws were also framed for the same purpose. As, for instance, the two decrees carried almost unanimously on June 30, and July 3, 1290.[4] By these all guild-

[1] Prof. P. Santini has treated of this question in his article entitled "Condizione personale degli abitanti del contado nel secolo xiii.," "Arch. Stor. It." (Series iv. vol. xvii. p. 178 and fol.). He justly remarks that there is no basis of comparison between the Bolognese law of 1256 and the Florentine law of 1289, seeing that they relate to persons of a different class and to two different periods of the movement set on foot in every commune for ameliorating the conditions of the inhabitants of the *contado* (p. 188 and fol.).

[2] Villani, vii. 132. [3] Ammirato, bk. iii. *ad annum.*

[4] *Vide* Note B at the end of this chapter.

masters were prohibited, under severe penalties, from forming monopolies, agreements, compacts, fictitious sales, or other arrangements tending to the imposition of arbitrary prices, regardless of the rules prescribed by statute. And not only the individuals guilty of such infringment were subject to punishment and to be mulcted in the sum of 100 *lire*, but the guild to which they belonged was also subject to a fine of 500 *lire* for neglecting to enforce obedience to the laws, and its rectors and consuls were to be mulcted in 200 *lire*.

On January 2, 1291, another law was passed of a far weightier import, with the clearly expressed aim of curbing by force the wolfish rapacity of the nobles (volentes lupinas carnes salsamentis caninis involvi).[1] This decree rigorously prohibited recourse to any tribunal or magistrate save to the legally constituted authorities, such as the priors, the Captain, Podestà, or the judges in ordinary of the Commune. All persons having obtained from the Pope, Emperor, King Charles, or their respective vicars exemptions of any kind, or right of appeal to other magistrates, and pretending to exercise such right, and all persons who, with the same intent, should assert the power of exercising old feudal privileges, were warned to refrain from attempting to use such rights under penalty of the severest punishment. The new law minutely described different forms of similar fictitious exemptions, and determined the penalties incurred by their use. What seems strangest of all is, that this law decreed the punishment not only of persons asserting and trying to exercise the above-mentioned rights, of the notaries transcribing the acts, and the lawyers declaring them valid; but in cases where the real criminals should escape punishment, it likewise held responsible the relations and distant connections of the guilty, and even their labourers and tenants.

[1] *Vide* Note C at the end of this chapter.

At that period the populace, the well-to-do burghers and the nobles (*grandi*) formed as it were three classes of citizens, or, indeed, three distinct social bodies, who both for offence and defence, in all questions of party rancour, revenge or political privilege, acted as though every one was willingly and of necessity bound to be responsible for the deeds of his colleagues. Hence, recognising this state of things, certain extreme measures were decreed, which, although opportune and even imperative at the moment—in order to forward the democratic cause by assisting the weak to struggle against the powerful class—were none the less arbitrary. However, the necessity of employing the most stringent remedies was becoming daily more obvious. The nobles had been too much uplifted by the favours heaped on them by the Pope and the Angevins. And the brilliant success recently achieved at Campaldino, where victory had been decided by the prowess of Corso Donati and Vieri de' Cerchi, had so swelled their pride that they openly vaunted their contempt for the law, and constantly violated its prescriptions. This state of things finally produced the revolution of 1293, resulting in the constitution of the second popular government (*il secondo popolo*) and the total overthrow of the nobles.

NOTE A.

"In Dei nomine amen. Anno sue salutifere incarnationis millesimo ducetesimo octuagesimo nono, indictione secunda, die sexto intrante mense augusti. Cum libertas, qua cuiusque voluntas, non ex alieno, sed ex proprio dependet arbitrio, iure naturali multipliciter decoretur, qua etiam civitates et populi ab oppressionibus defenduntur, et ipsorum iura tuentur et augentur in melius, volentes ipsam et eius species non solum manutenere, sed etiam augmentare, per dominos Priores Artium civitatis Florentie, et alios Sapientes et bonos viros ad hoc habitos, et in domo Ghani Foresii et Consortum, in qua ipsi

Priores pro Comuni morantur, occasione providendi super infrascriptis unanimiter congregatos, ex licentia, bailia et auctoritate in eos collata, et eisdem eshibita et concessa in Consiliis et per Consilia domini Defensoris et Capitanei et etiam Comunis Florentie, provisum, ordinatum extitit salubriter et firmatum : Quod nullus, undecumque sit et cuiuscumque conditioni dignitatis vel status existat, possit audeat vel presumat per se vel per alium tacite vel espresse emere, vel alio aliquo titulo, iure, modo vel causa adquirere in perpetuum vel ad tempus aliquos Fideles. Colonos perpetuos vel conditionales, Adscriptitios vel Censitos vel aliquos alios cuiuscumque conditionis existant, vel aliqua alia iura scilicet angharia vel perangharia, vel quevis alia contra libertatem et condictionem persone alicuius, in civitate vel comitatu vel districtu Florentie ; et quod nullus, undecumque sit, et cuiusque condictionis, dignitatis vel status existat, possit, audeat vel presumat predicta vel aliquid predictorum vendere, vel quovis alio titulo alienare, iure modo vel causa concedere in perpetuum vel ad tempus alicui persone, undecumque sit, vel cuiusque condictionis dignitatis vel status, in Civitate vel comitatu vel districtu Florentie, decernentes irritum et inane et ipso iure non tenere, si quid in contrarium fieret in aliquo casu predictorum. Et tales contractus et alienationes quatenus procederent, de facto cassantes, ita quod nec emptoribus vel acquisitoribus ius aliquod acquiratur, nec etiam ad alienantes vel concedentes ins redeat, vel quomodolibet penes eos remaneat : sed sint tales Fideles, vel alterius conditionis astricti, et eorum bona, et filii et descendentes libere condictionis et status. Et nihilominus tales alienantes, vel quomodolibet in alios transferentes, in perpetuum vel ad tempus, per se vel per alium et quilibet eorum, et ipsorum et cuiusque eorum sindici, procuratores et nuntii, et tales emptores, vel alio quovis titulo, modo, causa vel iure acquirentes, per se vel per alium in perpetuum modo vel ad tempus, et eorum procuratores, sindici et nuntii et iudices et notarii et testes, qui predictis interfuerint vel ea scripserint, et quilibet eorum, condempnentur in libris mille f. p., que effectualiter exigantur, non obstantibus aliquibus pactis vel conventionibus, etiam iuramento vel pena vallatis, iam factis vel in posterum ineundis, super predictis vel aliquo predictorum vendendis, permutandis vel alio quovis modo vel titulo transferendis. Quos contractus supradicti domini Priores et Sapientes nullius valoris et roboris fore decreverunt, et quatenus de facto processissent vel procederent, totaliter cassaverunt et cassant. Decernentes etiam quod si aliquis non subiectus iurisdictioni Comunis Florentie, et qui non respondeat in civilibus et criminalibus regimini florentino, vel non solvat libras et factiones Comunis Florentie, undecunque sit, per se vel per alium, predictos contractus vel aliquem

predictorum iniret aliquo modo iure vel causa, quod pater et fratres et alii propinquiores ipsius, si patrem vel fratrem non haberet, et quilibet eorum condempnentur in libris mille f. p., que pena effectualiter exigatur; reservantes etiam sibi et populo florentino potestatem super predictis et quolibet predictorum acrius providendi contra tales concedentes vel concessiones recipientes per se vel per alium in aliquibus casibus de predictis. Et quod in predictis omnibus et singulis et circa predicta domini Potestas et Defensor et Capitaneus presentes et futuri et quilibet eorum plenum, merum et liberum arbitrium habeant et exercere debeant contra illos, qui in predictis vel circa predicta committerent in personis et rebus, ita et taliter quod predicta omnia et singula effectualiter observentur et executioni mandentur. Salvo tamen quod Comuni Florentie quilibet possit licite vendere et in ipsum Comune predicta iura transferre; et etiam ipsi Fideles et alii supradicti se ipsos et eorum filios et descendentes et bona licite possint redimere sine pena; et illi tales qui talia iura haberent, possint ipsa iura ipsis fidelibus volentibus se redimere vendere et eos liberare a tali iure licite et impune. Et hec omnia et singula locum habeant ad futura et etiam ad preterita, a kallendis ianuarii proxime presentis citra, currentibus annis Domini millesimo CC° LXXXVIII° indictione secunda."

This law was read and approved of in the general and special council of the captain and of the *capitudini*, as was the custom, but not in that of the Podestà. It has been published many times, but not without mistakes and omissions: by the lawyer Migliorotto Maccioni in a work of his in favour of the Counts of Gherardesca (vol. ii. p. 74); by C. F. Von Rumohr, "Ursprung der Besitzlosigkeit des Colonen in neuren Toscana" (Hamburg, 1830), pp. 100–103; and in the "Osservatore Fiorentino" (vol. iv. p. 179). Florence: Ricci, 1821. We give it as it is in the original text in the State Archives of Florence, *Provvisioni* Registro 2, a. c. 24–25.

NOTE B.

The defender of the artisans and of the guilds, Captain and *Conservatore* of the city and commune of Florence, brought forward the proposal in the special and general council on June 30, 1290, "presentibus et volentibus Dominis Prioribus Artium," and the proposal, carried almost unanimously (*placuit quasi omnibus*), ran as follows:—"Quia per quamplures homines civitatis Florentie fide dignos, relatum est coram officio dominorum Priorum Artium, quod multi sunt artifices et comunitates seu universitates Artium et earum Rectores, qui certum modum et formam indecentem, et certum precium incongruum imponunt in eorum mercantiis et rebus eorum

Artium vendendis contra iustitiam et Rempublicam." It ended by strictly forbidding every sort of monopoly and every contract of sale arranged in a manner contrary to custom or to the laws, "et quod dogana aliqua vel compositio non fiat contra honorem et iurisdictionem Comunis Florentie, per quam vel quas prohibitum sit a Rectoribus vel Consulibus ipsorum Artis, quod aliqui vel aliquis ad certum modum et certam formam et certum precium vendant, vel vendere debeant mercantias," ec. To which Guidotto Canigiani added, that the signory should henceforward formulate other articles, not so as to weaken the said provision, but only to strengthen it more and more in the interest of the guilds. And his amendment was approved together with the provision itself (State Archives, Florence, *Provvisioni*, Registro iv. c. 29). And on the 3rd of July, by reason of the former amendment, the *priori* of the guilds, together with the other wise men consulted by them, decreed: "Quod nulli Consules vel Rectores alicuius Artis, aut aliquis alius, vice et nomine alicuius Artis, vel aliqua singularis persona alicuius Artis, utatur aliquo ordinamento scripto vel non scripto, extra Constitutum Artis approbatum per Comune Florentie, vel aliter vel ultra quam contineatur in statuto talis Artis, ec. . . . Et siqua facta essent in contarium vel fierent in futuro tacite vel expresse, non valeant nec teneant ullo modo vel iure, sed sint cassa et irrita ipso iure ec. Et quod nullus notarius vel alius scriptor scribere debeat aliquid de predictis vel contra predicta, et nullus nuntius vel alius precipiat aliquid aliquibus artificibus contra predicta: sub pena Rectori et Consuli contrafacienti auferenda librarum cc. pro quolibet et qualibet vice; et Arti, librarum quingentarum; et sub pena librarum centum pro quolibet, qui observaret talia ordinamenta vel precepta prohibita; et sub pena libr. centum cuilibet qui de predictis ordinamentis prohibitis faceret precepta Arti seu artificibus alicuius Artis." This provision was to be read in the captain's council every month and cried about the city. (*Provvisioni*,, Registro, iv. a. c. 30–31.)

NOTE C.

On the 31st of January (new style, 1291) a provision was made, beginning with this singular proemium:—"Ad honorem, ec. Ut cives et comitatini Florentie non opprimantur sicut hactenus oppressi sunt, et ut hominum fraudibus et malitiis que circa infrascripta committi solent, debitis remediis obvietur et resistatur, quod quidem videtur nullomodo fieri posse, nisi iuxta sapientis doctrinam, dicentis quod contraria suis purgantur contrariis; ideoquo volentes lupinas carnes salsamentis caninis involvi et castigari debere, ita quod lupi

rapacitas et agni mansuetudo pari passu ambulent, et in eodem ovili ivant pacifice et quiete," ec.

It goes on to severely forbid that any one should dare to: "aliquas litteras impetrare vel impetrari facere, aut privilegium vel rescriptum, per quas vel quod aliquis vel aliqui de civitate vel districtu Florentie citentur vel trahantur ad causam, questionem vel litigium aut examen alicuius indicis, nisi coram domino Potestate, Capitaneo et aliis officialibus Comunis Florentie;" and that he who, having falsified, did not cease from falsifying, when reprimanded, and failed to pay damages and interest within three days, was to be fined one hundred small *fiorini*, or more, according to the judgment of the *Podestà* or of the captain, or of any other magistrate who had undertaken the prosecution. And if any one sought to disobey or escape from the jurisdiction of the magistrates, "teneantur Potestas et Capitaneus, qui de predictis requisitus esset, condemnare patrem vel filium vel fratrem carnalem vel cuginum ex parte patris vel patruum et nepotes eius, ec., in dicta pena, et dictam condemnationem exigere cum effectu, et etiam in maiori pena, ad arbitrium eorum et cuiuscunque eorum, si eis vel alteri eorum videbitur expedire. Et nichilominus compellat eos et quemlibet eorum dare et facere tali contra quem dicerentur tales littere vel privilegium vel rescriptum impetrata, omnes expensas quas faceret vel fecissit, occasione predicta, credendo de predictis expensis iuramento huiusmodi contra quem dicerentur predicta vel aliquod predictorum impetrata."

Moreover, as we have said before, any one, who in the city, Commune, or district of Florence, directly or indirectly published such acts, together with the notary who wrote them out, and the lawyer who defended them, was subject to severe penalties. The Podestà and the captain could proceed as they pleased against any one who, "audeat vel presumat facere precipi eis vel alicui eorum, quod faciant aliquid vel ab aliquo desistant, vel citari Potestatem vel Capitaneum vel Priores vel Consiliarios vel aliquem officialem Comunis Florentie, vel eorum offitia impedire vel retardare coram aliquo vel aliquibus, ex autoritate aliquarum licterarum, privilegii vel rescripti, vel ex auctoritate alicuius indicii ordinarii, delegati vel subdelegati, vel vicarii," And as usual the penalties could be applied to relations.

As it happened that many requested the support of civil justice (*brachium seculare*) "in deffectum iuris et in lesionem et in preiuditium personarum et locorum subdittorum Comuni Florentie," ec., it was decreed that this support should be given only when the suit was over, before competent magistrates, and after it had been examined. If in this case the magistrates refused, then action could be taken against them. But otherwise, those who should demand an unjust sentence

were subject to penalties, together with their relations, according to the first paragraph of this law. "Verum si consanguineos, ut dictum est, non haberet, procedatur contra bona talis pretentis brachium seculare, et contra inquilinos, laboratores, pensionarios et fictaiuolos eiusdem potentis, et illorum cuius occasione petitur, et ad alia procedatur, prout ipsis dominis Potestati vel Capitaneo et Prioribus videbitur expedire." Two other paragraphs follow, of which there are ten in all, but at this point a gap occurs in the manuscript, (*Provvisioni*, Registro ii. a. c. 175–177).

CHAPTER VI.

THE COMMERCIAL INTERESTS AND POLICY OF THE GREATER GUILDS IN FLORENCE.[1]

I.

THE end of the thirteenth century marks the opening of a new era in the history of Italy and of Europe. During the period of political disorder prevailing throughout Northern Europe ever since the days of Charlemagne, a literary culture was nevertheless developed, which, although little heeded in past times, has been most clearly elucidated by recent learned research. The literature of Provence, the romance of chivalry, the poems arranged in the cycles of Charlemagne, the Round Table, the Nibelungen Lied, the innumerable ballads, the splendid cathedrals reared on both banks of the Rhine and constituting an art never to be surpassed by its countless imitators, were one and all the offspring of the mighty, primitive culture of the Middle Ages, in which, for a long time, Italy had no share. In Northern Europe, where conquerors and conquered amalgamated with less difficulty, national art and literature were sooner able to spring into being. In Italy, on the contrary, the conquered were oppressed, but

[1] Originally published in the *Politecnico* of Milan ; Nos. for June and July, 1867.

never entirely fused with their conquerors; gradually, rather, they began to assert their individuality and their rights. The original rise of the communes was the result of this struggle. Accordingly, at the time when France was composing love-songs and poems of chivalry, Italy was absorbed in founding political institutions and preparing to win freedom.

At the beginning of the fourteenth century the scene was completely changed. Every branch of mediæval literature seemed smitten with an instantaneous decay, northern imagination and fancy to be suddenly withered. Even there, in the north, men begin to strive, slowly and painfully, at the task of political organisation. Meanwhile, the Italian communes being already constituted, our country had already given birth to a national literature, of so dazzling a splendour as to banish all others from view, and relegate to centuries of oblivion the fruits of earlier culture elsewhere. It was precisely at this moment that Florence, then the chief seat and centre of the new Italian culture, was subject to the rule of the greater guilds. The Empire seemed to have abandoned its pretentions with regard to Italy; the Papacy, weakened and menaced, no longer dared to impose its commands on the secular world in its former imperious fashion; the struggle between conquerors and conquered had come to an end, all distinction between the German and Latin races having utterly disappeared, and Italy being peopled by Italians alone.

Now, too, the prolonged conflict waged by the democracy of Florence against the feudal aristocracy was about to terminate in the former's victory, and the Commonwealth could be justly entitled a Republic of merchants, whose trade was soon to enrich them to an apparently fabulous extent. All seemed to herald a new era of peace, prosperity, and concord. But in the light of after

events we perceive that the Republic continued to be sorely harassed by internecine strife; also that, in spite of the splendid results achieved in art and commerce, political institutions were on the wane, and the loss of liberty becoming almost a foregone conclusion. How was it that a Commune, enabled to assert its existence at the beginning of the twelfth century and steadily progress in the face of tremendous obstacles, should now show symptoms of decline in the heyday of its triumph? How was it that civil war should still be carried on when all motive for discord seemed extinguished by the victory of the popular party now at the head of the State? We shall discover the answer to this problem by investigating more closely the new conditions of Florentine society, and more particularly the conditions of the trade guilds constituting its chief strength and nucleus.

The number of the Florentine guilds welded in associations had been, after various changes, finally fixed at twenty-one: seven greater and fourteen lesser guilds, although often found otherwise divided into twelve greater and twelve lesser. At any rate, the guilds of first rank and decidedly highest importance were the following:—

1. The Guild of Judges and Notaries.
2. The Guild of Calimala, or Dressers of Foreign Cloth.
3. The Guild of Wool.
4. The Guild of Silk, or of Porta Santa Maria.
5. The Guild of Money-changers.
6. The Guild of Doctors and Druggists
7. The Guild of Skinners and Furriers.

As every one can see, the first on the list is altogether outside the limits of trade and commerce, and seems rather to belong to the learned professions. But it may be remarked that in those days judges and notaries

contributed very largely to the advancement of the guilds, and were continually employed in their service. Together with the consuls, they constituted the court or tribunal of every guild, and gave judgment in all commercial suits tried there; they arranged all disputes, pronounced or suggested penal sentences. Then, too, it was the peculiar function of the notaries to draw up new statutes, continually reform them, and provide for their due enforcement. They were likewise engaged to prepare contracts, and were frequently the mouthpieces of the consuls at the meetings of the greater and lesser guilds. Good judges and notaries were in great demand throughout Italy, and, as necessary instruments of prosperity, richly remunerated for their services. Accordingly, their guild became one of the most influential in Florence, and its notaries were reputed the best-skilled in the world. Goro Dati speaks of this guild in his "Storia di Firenze," saying that "it has a proconsul at the head of its consuls, wields great authority, and may be considered the parent stem of the whole notarial profession throughout Christendom, inasmuch as the great masters of that profession have been leaders and members of this Guild. Bologna is the fountain of doctors of the law, Florence of doctors of the notariate." [1] At public functions the proconsul took precedence over all the consuls, and came directly after the chief magistrate of the Republic. As head of the judges and notaries he held judicial authority, as it were, over all the guilds.

The four next in order—*i.e.*, the Calimala, Wool, Silk, and Exchange—commanded the largest share of Florentine commerce and industry. They were of very ancient origin. Ammirato remarks that the consuls of the guilds are mentioned in a Patent of 1204, but there is documentary record of them at a much earlier date. But,

[1] *Vide* the Florentine edition of 1755, p. 133.

although boasting so old an existence, the guilds passed through a long period of gradual formation, only developing their strength much later, and each at a different time. The oldest and also the first to make progress were the Calimala and Wool Guilds, virtually exercising almost the same industry, inasmuch as both dressed woollen stuffs, and carried on an extensive business with them. Nevertheless, seeing that each pursued its trade in a way peculiar to itself, and achieved thereby a special individual importance, the two guilds always remained separate and distinct from each other.

From the earliest mediæval times the manners and customs of the Italians had been more refined and civilised than those of barbarian peoples, and their handicraft far more advanced. We learn from a chronicler, quoted in Muratori, that when Charlemagne was in Italy he wished to go out hunting one day, and suddenly summoned his courtiers from Pavia. Precious Eastern stuffs having been already brought to that town by the Venetians, the courtiers were able to appear before the emperor clad in the richest attire. But during the hunt their precious stuffs and feathers were totally spoiled by rain and thorns, whereas the emperor's plain tunic of goatskin was as good as before. Thereupon Charlemagne turned to his followers and said, rather jeeringly: "Why do you throw away your money so fruitlessly, when you might wear skins, the most convenient, lasting, and least expensive of garments?"[1] We may certainly doubt the historic truth of this incident; but the chronicler's tale proves two things at all events, *i.e.*, that the custom of wearing the skins of goats or lambs was so general in the ninth century, that even an emperor might not disdain their use; and that, although Italian industry was then very

[1] This anecdote is related by the Friar of St. Gall, "De rebus bellicis Caroli Magni." *Vide* Muratori, Dissertazione xxv.

undeveloped, beautiful stuffs were procured from the Levant through the Venetian traders.

II.

The art of weaving coarse woollen stuffs is, however, so easy that it must have been soon revived in Italy, and was probably never completely abandoned. It would seem to have first begun to progress by imitating the simpler fabrics of the Eastern Empire, where cultivation and industry had survived to a much later date. In fact, all the earlier Italian stuffs bear names indicative of their Byzantine derivation, such, for instance, as *Velum holosericum*, *Fundathum alithinum*, *Vela tiria*, *bizantina*, *Crysoclava*, *&c.*[1] Nevertheless, although the craft of woollen manufacture is of very early origin, and was even practised by pastoral tribes, there were many obstacles to its development in Italy. Improvement in the breeding of sheep, and consequently in pasturing and agriculture, was required for its progress. But, whereas the Italian communes showed great solicitude for the promotion of trade, they not only despised but often crushed agriculture. The Republic was constituted and governed by artisans, who, after overthrowing the feudal lords, rose to supremacy; but the agricultural class, although far better treated in Tuscany than elsewhere, remained long bound to the soil, and never enjoyed rights of citizenship. This fact alone serves to indicate the rest. All laws and decrees relating to trade are full of good sense and foresight; while all concerning agriculture seem dictated by prejudice or jealousy.

Then, too, regarding pasturage and consequently the

[1] Muratori, Dissertazione xxv. *Vide* likewise Pignotti, "Storia della Toscana," vol. iv. Saggio iii. Florence, 1824.

woollen industry, it should be added that Tuscany, being a mountainous country, is adapted to the culture of vines and olives and excellent cereals, but deficient in meadow-land, whether natural or artificial. Accordingly, it was an exceedingly difficult task to improve the quality and quantity of the wool produced there. Although the Florentines soon succeeded in manufacturing the woollen stuffs called *pignolati*, *schiavini*, *and villaneschi*, these very coarse fabrics, the names of which sufficiently indicate their quality, only served for a limited trade in the territory or just beyond the borders of the Republic. And when it was attempted to improve the manufacture serious difficulties arose. To weave fine cloth from coarse wool was a fruitless labour; while to procure foreign wool from distant countries was no easy task in times when industry and commerce had scarcely any existence, and the cost of transport would have devoured the profits. Nevertheless, it was by conquering all these obstacles that the Florentines gave the first proofs of their genius for trade.

In Flanders, Holland, and Brabant far better wool was obtainable, and the art of weaving it so long established there that, as in the case of the linen webs of North Germany, the origin of the craft is lost in the obscurity of almost pre-historic times. But, notwithstanding the good quality of the yarn, the woollen stuffs manufactured in those countries were decidedly coarse, sent to market undressed, badly-finished, and dyed in very ugly and evanescent colours. Accordingly the Florentine merchants conceived the idea of importing these foreign stuffs in order to dress and dye them in their own workshops. Hence the origin of the Calimala or Calimara craft.[1] Bales of cloth began to arrive from Flanders, Holland, and Brabant, and these so-called *Frankish* or *ultramontane*

[1] We have already mentioned the probable derivation of this term.

stuffs were carded, shaved, dressed, and cut in Florence. This treatment removed all the knots coarsening the surface, and as the material was much finer than Italian wool it could be easily dyed in very delicate tints, and the Florentines soon surpassed all competitors in this particular art. Then, after being carefully ironed, faced, and folded, the cloth was re-sold in a very different condition and at a much higher price. From the first there was a great demand for these goods in Italy, and they were afterwards sent to the East, and bartered for drugs, dyes, and other Asiatic products. Finally, as their quality went on improving, they found their way to France, England, and the same markets whence they had originally come, and where they were sold in exchange for undressed fabrics. Thus the lack of original material was not only supplied, but foreign manufactures served to swell Florentine gains. A very extensive trade was carried on with comparatively little trouble, and as the process of wool-dressing gave employment to many hands, the Calimala Guild attained a position of great influence that was naturally shared by the Guild of Wool.[1]

In fact, the latter being stirred by emulation and greed for profit, used the utmost care to improve its manufactures. And the development of the craft was equally assisted by the labours of private individuals and the wise measures decreed by the State. At that time there was a monastic order in Italy known as the Humble Friars, originally founded by a few Lombard exiles, who, on being banished to North Germany in 1014 by Henry I., had learnt the very ancient craft of wool-weaving practised there. Later on, having formed a pious association, the exiles laboured at the trade for their bread, and after five years' absence returned home a united band of workers. Down to the year 1140 they remained laymen, but then

[1] *Vide* Pagnini, "Della Decima," vol. ii. sec. 4 and 5.

decided to form a religious order, afterwards sanctioned by Pope Innocent III. Once admitted to the priesthood, they no longer worked with their own hands, but retained the management of the business, had it carried on by laymen under the direction of a *mercatore*, and continually introduced new improvements. It was natural that cultivated men, with members of their order scattered over various provinces, should be able to forward the progress of the trade they had founded. In fact, they acquired so much celebrity for their administrative talents that we find them engaged at Florence and elsewhere as treasurers of the public revenue (*camarlinghi*) and as army contractors in time of war. Wherever a house of their order was established the wool-weaving craft immediately made advance. Hence, with its usual sharpsighted wisdom touching all questions of trade and commerce, the Florentine Republic, considering the houses of the *Umiliati* to be great industrial schools, invited the friars to establish a branch in the neighbourhood of Florence.

Accordingly in 1239 the Humble Brethren arrived and settled near the city in the Church of San Donato a Torri, granted to them by the State. Their presence led to the expected result. Before long their house became one of the principal centres of Florentine industry, so that the guild-masters complained of the friars' distance from the town, and urged them to move their establishment nearer to the walls. In 1250 they obtained buildings and land in the suburb of Sta Lucia sul Prato, and exemption from all taxes on their property, the which privilege was usually accorded by the Florentines to any one introducing a new branch of trade in the city. Then, in 1256, the Umiliati founded the church and monastery of Sta Caterina, in Borgo Ognissanti, and carved their arms over the entrance, *i.e.*, a wool-pack fastened crosswise by ropes. From that moment the wool craft made enormous advance in

Florence, and in every European market Florentine cloths began to rank above all others. Efforts were made to improve the rough material and to use additional care in dressing it, finer wools being imported from Tunis, Barbary, Spain, Portugal, Flanders, and lastly even from England. Thus so vast a trade was established, such great wealth accumulated, that the wool craft rivalled and surpassed the Calimala itself. Both guilds became great commercial powers in Europe, while in Florence the government dared not oppose their decisions.[1]

Giovanni Villani informs us, in his valuable account of Florentine statistics during the year 1338, that there were more than two hundred wool factories, turning out from seventy thousand to eighty thousand pieces of cloth, of the total value of one million two hundred thousand florins, "of the which sum a good third was kept at home for the works, without counting the earnings of the wool dressers in the said works, the which supplied a living to over thirty thousand persons." The chief profits of the trade were obtained by perfection of manufacture, rather than by any increase of produce. Even Villani remarked that thirty years earlier, that is, in 1308, the factories were more numerous, actually as many as three hundred, and producing one hundred thousand pieces of cloth: "but these stuffs were coarser, and of only half the value, having no intermixture of English wool, the which indeed they had not yet learnt to dress with the skill since acquired."[2] This clearly shows that the craft owed its first improvement in the thirteenth century to the Humble Friars, and was carried to perfection in the fifteenth century by the introduction of English woollens.

In the same year of 1338 the Calimala Guild owned twenty warehouses in Florence, "yearly receiving more than ten thousand pieces of cloth, to the value of three

[1] Pagnini, "Della Decima," ibid. [2] Villani, lib. xi. chap. 94.

hundred thousand florins, all sold in Florence, and without including those sent out of the city." [1] The Calimala craftsmen were exceedingly skilled as refiners and dyers, and particularly successful in preparing the crimson cloth for which there was a great demand in Florence, as it was used for the *lucco*, a hooded robe worn by all citizens entitled to enter the Public Palace and sit in the tribunals or councils of the Republic. The two guilds afterwards made a division of labour in order to avoid infringing each other's rights. The statutes absolutely prohibited the Calimala from dying anything save foreign stuffs, and the Woollen Guild had dyers of its own, forming, as it were, a subordinate association. These dyers were bound to deposit three hundred florins with the guild as a warranty, and fines were deducted from this sum whenever the goods delivered were soiled or dyed a bad colour. The officers of the guilds were exceedingly severe on these points. Every inch of cloth underwent the minutest examination, and the least defect in colour, quality, or measure exposed the workman to heavy penalties. Some of these great Florentine guilds were not composed solely of one trade, but were often agglomerations of various crafts, particularly in the case of the Wool Guild, which included many kinds of workmen, ranging from carders of the rough material to dyers and finers of the most costly fabrics. Thus, the guild being able to carry on the manufacture in all its details, and the different craftsmen required for the common end being all bonded together, there was no fear that any one branch of the trade would raise its prices to the detriment of the rest. The emblem of the Wool Guild was a lamb bearing a flag (*Agnus Dei*), while the Calimala showed a red eagle on a white bale corded with many twists.

During the whole of the fourteenth and a considerable

[1] Villani, lib. xi. chap. 94.

part of the fifteenth century these two guilds continued to progress, and maintained their supremacy in the markets of Europe. Nevertheless, they were always in a difficult position, since Italy could not supply them with sufficient raw material, nor could they obtain the number of hands required to carry on all the work connected with their business. To establish branches of the trade in neighbouring states and subject cities was an idea that found no place in the economic and political theories of the Middle Ages. In those days trade formed the chief strength and social power of the communes : hence every commune wished to have the monopoly of its advantages, and the statutes bristled with decrees inspired by this blindly jealous exclusiveness. For this reason, while pursuing the system of keeping the finer and more profitable processes of the manufacture in their own hands, the Florentines had opened factories for the first and coarser stages of the work in every place where the best wool could be found, that is in Holland, Brabant, England, and France. And even in these factories they took care that the more difficult and profitable share of the process should be done only by Florentine hands. Their chronicles prove that they then spoke of foreigners in the same terms now used by the latter with regard to ourselves : jeering at the indolence and stupidity of the northerners, who even on their own soil allowed strangers to snatch the bread from their mouths. But this state of things could not last long. From very early times the Flemings had always been a strong, hard-working race, and were very soon equalled by the French and English. So gradually the eyes of the northerners were opened, and the Florentines saw new factories rising abroad, side by side with and soon rivalling their own, and were obliged to admit that, to their own despite, they had taught foreigners the very trade of which they had meant to preserve the monopoly. Nor

was this the end of the matter. Being now on the alert, the northerners tried to check the exportation of their wools and of their uncut, or rather undressed, cloths; and from the end of the fifteenth century Henry VII. of England began to take measures to that effect. Thenceforth the Guilds of Wool and Calimala were doomed to decline in Florence. Fortunately, however, before this came about, the silk trade had assumed the same importance in Florentine commerce that was gradually slipping away from the other two crafts.

As every one is aware, the art of silk-weaving, though of very early origin in the East, was only introduced much later to the Western world. The Romans obtained a few silk stuffs from Persia, India, and China at an enormous expense; they also had certain insects from which material for highly esteemed fabrics was procured; but until the closing years of the Middle Ages the real silkworm was unknown in Italy, and the details of its first introduction in the West have not yet been fully ascertained. It is related that during the sixth century B.C. two Persian monks concealed some silkworm seed inside their staffs, and thus succeeded in bearing it to Constantinople, where they taught the art of rearing the insects. In this wise the silk trade is supposed to have been originated in the dominions of the Byzantine Empire, and carried thence by Arabs and Mahomedans to Sicily and Greece. When Roger II., Count of Sicily, conquered the Ionian islands, he returned to Palermo with numerous prisoners (1147–48), who greatly assisted the progress of the silk trade there. Thence it easily penetrated to Lombardy and Tuscany; but was first established and perfected in Lucca, all the Florentines being still devoted to the profitable wool trade.

The consuls of the Silk Guild—or of Por' Santa Maria, as it was designated in Florence, from the name of its

street—are mentioned among other guild-masters in public treaties; but although this craft too may be of ancient date, it certainly began to flourish much later than the rest. Noting the fact that Giovanni Villani makes no allusion to the Silk Guild in his very minute account of Florentine trade and commerce in 1338, we are inclined to believe that it had made very little advance at that period.[1]

We know that when Uguccioni della Faggiola besieged and took Lucca (1314), fugitives from that city brought their improved method of silk-weaving to Lombardy, Venice, and Tuscany, and the art being particularly undeveloped in Florence, many chroniclers gave the Lucchese the credit of having first introduced it there. Nevertheless, for many years afterwards the silk trade was carried on by importing the raw material from the East. But as the wool craft began to decline, Florence gave its whole attention to silk, and the trade speedily began to prosper. In the early years of the fifteenth century, Gino Capponi—he who was commissary to the camp at the siege of Pisa—taught the Florentines the art of spinning the gold thread they had hitherto imported from Cologne or from Cyprus to interweave with their silk. This was the beginning of that delicate manufacture of gold and silver brocades, in which by the combination of technical skill with artistic sense, the Florentines soon surpassed all rival manufacturers. The markets from which their woollen stuffs had been ousted, were speedily reconquered by their silken cloths and brocades. During the latter half of the fifteenth century, in fact, we find

[1] It would seem that the Guild of Por' Santa Maria originally traded in Florentine woollen stuffs, and that the silk merchants formed a secondary and separate branch. Gradually, however, they became amalgamated with the guild (early in the thirteenth century), and then became its principal components, until at last the Silk Guild and Por' Santa Maria were entirely fused in one.

Benedetto Dei, a merchant of the Bardi Company, writing a letter to Venice praising the glory and greatness of Florentine commerce and saying : "We have two crafts worthier and greater than any four contained in your city of Venice." And the gist of his subsequent remarks was to this effect : "Our woollen stuffs go to Rome, Naples, Sicily, the Morea, Constantinople, Broussa, Pera, Gallipoli, Schio, Rhodes, and Salonica. Then, as to the silk and gold brocades, we produce more than Venice, Genoa, and Lucca combined, and you see that we have houses, banks, and warehouses at Lyons, Bruges, London, Antwerp, Avignon, Geneva, Marseilles, and in Provence."[1] This long list of cities plainly shows that in Dei's time Florentine woollens, though still prized in the East, had been driven from the principal markets of the West, and replaced by silk stuffs ; and thus the two guilds shared commerce between them, one in the East, the other in the West. Also, according to Dei, Florence then possessed eighty-three factories, where various tissues of silk, gold, and silver were produced known by the names of damasks, velvets, satins, taffetas, and *maremmati*, and most of the raw silk used in their fabrication was still imported from the East by Florentine galleys.[2]

This is one of the trades longest preserved in Florence and other parts of Italy, and to this day silk is among the most important of our products. With this difference, however, that whereas in past times the weaving of the silk was our chief source of profit, at present we frequently export the raw material, repurchasing at an enormously increased price the fabrics returned to us from foreign looms. In old times we imported woollen

[1] *Vide* the "Cronaca" of Benedetto Dei (1470–92), preserved among the MSS. of the Magliabecchian Library. Many interesting portions of this "Cronaca" have been published in the appendix to vol. ii. of Pagnini's "Decima."

[2] *Vide* the same "Cronaca" of Dei.

and silk yarn, and exported Italian cloth and brocade; in these days, on the contrary, we send no small portion of our raw silk to Lyons, and receive it back in a manufactured state. In the same way other raw materials, which we might easily work up ourselves, are despatched to foreign factories.

III.

There was one branch of industry, however, almost solely the product of human talent and energy, in which the Florentines stood positively first. From the opening of the thirteenth to the end of the fifteenth century the money-changers' craft was an essentially Florentine business. For as soon as the merchants had established commercial relations with all the markets of the East and the West, they naturally put into circulation a large quantity of specie. Therefore it naturally ensued that if any trader of Antwerp or Bruges wished to forward money to Italy or Constantinople, the easiest and safest plan was to apply to some of the Florentine merchants in his own town. The latter bought up the wool and rough cloths, which, after being dressed in Florence, either returned to Northern Europe, or found their way to Constantinople, Caffa, or Tana (Azov), in exchange for silks, dyes, and spices. Accordingly the transmittal of any sum to any part of the then known world cost them little more trouble than the despatch of an ordinary letter, and was always a source of gain. For they received *agio* on their money, and by sending it in the form of merchandise, reaped a second profit. When, on the contrary, any Florentine wished to send a hundred florins to London, he had only to walk a few steps to find some merchant of the Calimala or Por' Santa Maria, who, by a line to his correspondent in Lombard Street, caused the payment to

be made. These so-called letters of exchange (*lettere di cambio*) proved one of the most useful of inventions for the advancement of modern trade. There has been much discussion as to whom this discovery was originally owed. Some attribute it to the fugitive, persecuted Jews in France and England; while others ascribe it, at a much later date, to the Guelphs banished from Florence in the thirteenth century. But it is very difficult to ascertain who was the first author of what cannot be justly styled a discovery, seeing that it is an arrangement so readily occurring to the mind, that examples of it are even to be found in very remote antiquity. Besides, the real importance of the letter of exchange consists not in its invention, but in its legally authorised value, its extensive use, and the thousand different ways in which it may be turned to account for the speedy transmission and increase of capital. On these points the Florentines of the period were altogether unforestalled and unsurpassed, being superior masters of the art of finance.

When the exiled Guelphs went wandering about the world in the thirteenth century they strengthened the wide-spreading commercial ties established by Florence, and founding banks in all parts, gave a tremendous impulse to the money-changers' trade. Accordingly they were credited with the invention of the "letters of exchange," which now being widely circulated, gained added importance. In fact, all subtle and ingenious devices for multiplying gold, by despatching it to every market where, being scarce, it consequently commanded the highest price and interest, and almost all the complicated and difficult operations practised by our modern bankers, were already familiar to the Florentines. Whenever the Republic was obliged to borrow money it obtained loans from the bankers of Florence on precisely the same system and

method in use at this day, no source of profit being unknown to those financiers. Also, when the total of these loans was formed into the so-called *Monte Comune*, paying interest on the consolidated capital, the *luoghi del Monte*, which would nowadays go by the name of "shares of the public debt," were negotiated precisely as at present. We find the Florentine merchants under the Arcades of the New Market, speculating on the rise and fall of stock, like modern men on "'Change" in great capitals.[1] And the profits of similar ventures were far greater at a time when lawful interest varied between 10 and 20 per cent., and few felt any scruples against carrying it up to 40 per cent. by means of fictitious contracts. For instance, the lenders would fix an impossibly early date for the receipt of the lawful interest, and after that date took 40 per cent. with the pretext that the extra amount was the fine agreed upon in case of non-payment.

It should be kept in mind that the Florentines reaped great advantages in all these banking operations from the excellent quality of their coinage, for the Republican Mint always kept the best interests of commerce in view. To this end, in the year 1252, the gold florin of twenty carats was struck, with the figure of St. John on one side and the lily of Florence on the reverse; and, owing to the goodness of the metal and its alloy, soon obtained currency

[1] "Again, a law was passed in 1371, inasmuch as many men traded the shares of the Monte in this wise: One said to another: 'the shares of the Monte are at thirty; I wish to do some business with you to-day. This time next year I'll sell to you, or you to me, at what price shall we say?' At thirty-one the share [of one hundred]? 'What premium do you ask for this?' So they bargained, and the terms were fixed. When shares fell, the merchant bought, if they rose, he sold out, and the stock changed hands twenty times in the year. Accordingly a tax was charged of two florins in the hundred for every transfer." Marchionne di Coppo Stefani, vol. viii. p. 97, in the "Delizie degli Eruditi Toscani," vol. xiv.

in every Eastern as well as European market. Eight of these florins weighed one ounce, and a single florin was valued at about twelve Italian *lire*. The Florentines, however, usually made their calculations in *lire*, *soldi*, and *denari*. The silver *lira*, then the conventional standard, consisted of twenty *soldi*, and the *soldo* of twelve *denari*. The florin seldom altered in value, but the *lira*, either from the greater variability in the price of silver, or from other causes, was constantly altering its rate with regard to the florin. In 1252 the latter was equivalent to the *lira*, and therefore similarly divided into twenty *soldi*; in 1282 it already consisted of thirty-two *soldi*; in 1331, of sixty *soldi*, or three *lire*, and always changing in value, rose to four *lire*, eight *soldi* by the year 1464.

The Florentines had discerned how greatly their commerce was benefited by the use of a coin universally prized in all markets supplied with their goods. But in the beginning of the fifteenth century, when their trade penetrated farther into the East, they found themselves forestalled by the Venetians, whose gold ducat, somewhat larger and heavier than the florin, was already current there. Accordingly, in 1422, they decreed the issue of another florin, equivalent to the Venetian ducat in weight, size, and value, and therefore easily exchanged for it, And as this new and larger florin was to be carried to the Levant on board-ship, they named it the "broad florin," or the "galley florin," to distinguish it from the older "sealed florin" (*fiorino di suggello*). In 1471 the older coin only was re-issued, and kept in circulation down to 1530, when it was held equivalent to seven *lire*, and was then withdrawn for a time.[1] Thus we see that for a considerable period two different florins were in use, that the *lira* altered in value from one year to another; and

[1] Vettori, "Il Fiorino d'oro"; Orsini, "Storia delle Monete." Florence, 1760.

if we likewise remember that economists are still unagreed as to the exact difference between the present value of gold and silver and their value in the days of the Republic, we shall recognise the difficulty of making any calculation sufficiently exact to afford any precise idea of the relative prices of things. It is asserted by some writers that a given quantity of gold was only worth in those days double its present value; while others exaggerated its value to fortyfold. Sismondi believes that in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries gold must have been worth four times as much as at present. Certainly the florin, or *zechin*, as it was called later, is worth about twelve Italian *lire*. But the difference in the value of gold remains involved in uncertainty. Besides, when old writers reckon by *lire*, it is needful to remember that these coins varied in value; that it is impossible to make even an approximative calculation without knowing the exact date referred to.

Returning to the Guild of Changers, we must again insist on the point that, in addition to the extended commercial relations, the wise measures enforced by the Republic and the singular activity of the citizens, the rapid prosperity of the Florentine bankers was also greatly enhanced by their nearness to Rome. The revenues of the Holy See and of its prelates in all parts of Christendom were all poured into the Eternal City. There gathered the spiritual lords, bishops, and cardinals, holding rich benefices in the East or the West; thither from all the remotest ends of the known world believers sent sums of "St. Peter's pence," together with the costly offerings suited to a period of religious faith and fanaticism. The keen-witted Florentines quickly recognised the advantage of becoming bankers to the Pope; for thus the largest floating capital in the world would have to pass through their hands. So, from the first, they used the most per-

sistent efforts to obtain that position. If we find them clinging to the Guelph cause through all changes of time and circumstance, and preserving the name of Guelphs, even when the term had lost all meaning, we must attribute no little weight to commercial as well as to political motives. Placed in the centre of Italy, and not far from Rome, they had to struggle chiefly against the Siennese, who were still nearer to the Eternal City. For this reason we soon find them engaged in warfare and jealous strife with Sienna, the which republic was subsequently worsted, not only in fight, but also by the wider-stretching enterprise of Florentine commerce. It is proved by the correspondence of Gregory IX. that even in 1233 the Tuscans were forwarding remittances to the Pope from various parts of the world; and gradually the monopoly of this business became more exclusively concentrated in Florentine hands. When the Pontifical Seat was transferred from Rome to Avignon (1305), and on its restoration later to Rome again, there occurred, twice at least, an enormous displacement of interest, a great movement of capital, and a necessity for large remittances in cash; and, according to the best authorities, this was the favourable moment when the Florentine contractors of the Papal revenues were enabled to become the principal bankers of Rome. From that time their fortune was assured, the greatest banking business in Europe passed through their hands, and they rose to so high a repute, that all sought their help and advice on matters of finance.

We see the Florentines invited to manage the mints, and fix the weights and measures of various European states. In 1278 a convention between the King of France and the Lombard and Tuscan *Universitates* invites both to find money for the former's government. In 1306 the Modenese people issued a decree, appealing for the same purpose, to the notaries and bankers of Florence.

Then in 1302, when the King of France, lacking funds wherewith to make war, decided on repeated debasement of the coinage, this fatal step was attributed to the advice of two Florentines, Bicci and Musciatto Franzesi. These men were severely censured by their fellow-citizens, many of whom had been ruined by the bad French currency. On all occasions when the French sovereigns were on the eve of a great war, they were practically compelled to first secure the aid of some known Florentine banker in bearing the expense. Some of these bankers held the same position in Europe as the Rothschilds of the present day, and accumulated fortunes of apparently fabulous amounts. In 1260 the Salimbeni house lent twenty thousand florins to the Siennese. In 1338 we find the Bardi and Peruzzi creditors of King Edward III. of England for one million three hundred and sixty-five florins, the which, without reckoning the difference in the value of gold, would amount to about sixteen millions of Italian *lire;* and allowing for that difference, would amount, as Sismondi has calculated, to no less than sixty-four millions. Pagnini adds a list of many other loans, amounting to a positively enormous total. In 1321 the Peruzzi had a credit of 191,000 florins on the Order of Jerusalem alone, and the Bardi another of 133,000 florins. In 1348 the house of Tommaso di Carroccio degli Alberti and his kinsmen had banks at Avignon, Brussells, Paris, Sienna, Perugia, Rome, Naples, Barletta, Constantinople, and Venice.[1] And at the close of the fifteenth century Philippe de Commines declared that Edward IV. of England owed his crown to the help of Florentine bankers.

The Money-changers' Guild was one of the oldest in

[1] Pagnini, "Della Decima," vol. ii. sec. iii. chaps. i.–iv. Other details are supplied by Ammirato, Dei, and more especially by Villani (xi. 88, and xii. 55).

Florence, its consuls being named on the same footing as the rest in all public records ; and a copy of its statutes, dated 1299 (1300 new style), makes reference to an earlier code of 1280, that was not the earliest of all. This craft prospered and waned with the commerce of Florence.[1] It was carried on in the New Market, where it had shops with counters or *tavoletti*, money-bags, and ledgers. All business had to be performed in the shop, and registered in the account book, and heavy penalties were exacted for any infringement of the rule ; nor was any one allowed to exercise the craft without being inscribed on the matriculation list, a privilege only to be obtained by having given proofs of capacity and honesty during matriculation, and sworn to obey the statutes of the guild. In 1338 there were about eighty of these money-changers' stalls, and Florence coined from 350,000 to 400,000 gold florins.[1] In 1422 these stalls numbered seventy-two, while it was calculated that Florence had a capital of two million florins in circulation, without including the value of the merchandise in the city.[2] In 1472, partly because the first signs of the decline of trade were appearing, and partly because trade was becoming restricted to a more and more limited number of firms, the banks were already reduced to thirty-three,[3] although the chronicler Benedetto Dei still remarked with pride that these bankers did business in the East and the West, "as is well known to the Venetians and Genoese, and likewise to the Court of Rome."[4] They were everywhere known by the names of changers, lenders, usurers, Tuscans, and Lombards, and, together with other Italian houses, had a street of their own both in London and Paris.

[1] G. Villani, xl. 54. [2] Ammirato, lib. 18, *ad annum*.
[3] "Cronaca" of Benedetto Dei, given in Pagnini.
[4] Ibid., vol. ii. p. 275.

IV.

In order to complete the list of the greater guilds, we must say a few words concerning the Doctors and Druggists, and Skinners and Furriers, and particularly the former. Although of less importance commercially than the guilds already described, they had a great share in promoting Florentine trade in the Levant, whence nearly all drugs and spices were received in exchange, and no less than twenty-two different qualities of fur, many of which, being the skins of rare animals, formed some of the dearest articles of luxury. Therefore these two guilds likewise rose to great influence, inasmuch as the Eastern trade has invariably proved the main source of wealth for all nations, and most of all for Italy. It served to sustain the high fortunes of Venice ; it had enriched Amalfi, Genoa, and Pisa ; and accordingly was constantly coveted by the Florentines, whose highest prosperity indeed was only attained when the Black Sea being opened to their galleys, they could enjoy the same rights as the Venetians in Egypt, Constantinople, and the Crimea. This, so long their principal aim, was not, however, quickly attained : they continued to wrestle for it throughout almost the whole of the fourteenth century.

The struggles maintained by the Florentines for the extension of their trade play a very important part in the history of the Republic, not only demonstrating the progress of their wealth, but likewise the ruling motives of their policy. In fact, the moment they had won their first successes against the nobles of the *contado* surrounding them on all sides, they immediately tried to monopolise the whole trade with Lombardy. One of the first treaties signed by them was with the Ubaldini, lords

of the Mugello, for the purpose of opening that highway for their products; and shortly afterwards they made a treaty with the Bolognese (1203). But in course of time the latter, profiting by their position, exacted heavier tolls on the merchandise now continually passing through their territory; whereupon the Florentines promptly came to terms with Modena, opening a fresh road for their commerce, and thus compelling Bologna to respect the original agreement. In 1282, at the time of the war against Pisa, they arranged treaties guaranteeing free passage to their merchandise through Lucca, Prato, Pistoia, and Volterra, and thus began their domination over the commerce of Tuscany. Nearly all their wars were undertaken for purposes of trade, and ended with trading agreements. In 1390 they entered into conventions with Faenza and Ravenna, and then step by step with the majority of the Italian cities.

The continual increase of Florentine commerce by land made the necessity of free access to the sea ever more pressing and indispensable. But to reach either Porto Pisano or Leghorn, the only ports convenient for their trade, they must necessarily traverse the republic of Pisa, their powerful neighbour and rival. For if the Florentines were masters of nearly the whole Tuscan trade by land, the Pisans were lords of the sea, and had no intention of allowing their realm to be snatched from them by so industrious and energetic a race as their competing neighbours. Accordingly the Pisans had only to demand heavy tolls for the passage of those neighbours' goods, and the Florentines were left with no remedy save recourse to arms. Hence the continual warfare and perpetual rivalry of the two republics. After the capture of Volterra by the Florentines in 1254, the threatening attitude of their victorious troops drove the Pisans to grant free passage to their merchandise, and in 1273,

1293, 1327, and 1329 similarly compelled them to adhere to the same terms. Pisa, however, never yielded the point with a good grace, but merely to avoid war, or in consequence of defeat.

Meanwhile the Florentines were continually extending their trade to remoter parts of the East, and concluding fresh treaties there. This, while increasing their desire to command the sea, fanned the jealousy of Pisa to a fiercer flame. In Pagnini's work on "La Decima" we find an essay on the "Practise of Trade" ("Pratica della Mercatura"), written early in the fourteenth century by an agent of the Bardi firm, one Balducci Pegolotti. Next to Marco Polo's "Milione," this work is one of our most important sources of information regarding Italian travels and trading enterprises in the Levant, and furnishes specially minute details of Florentine traffic. From what Pegolotti tells us of his own doings, we may judge what was done by his fellow-citizens in general. In 1315 he succeeded in securing for them in Antwerp and Brabant similar franchises to those already enjoyed by the Genoese, Germans, and English. He afterwards went to the Levant, and found at Cyprus that the Bardi and Peruzzi alone shared the privilege granted to the Pisans of only paying 2 per cent. import and export duty; whereas all other Florentines had either to pay 4 per cent., or feign to be Pisans, a device exposing them to many spiteful reprisals from the latter, who treated them *worse than slaves or Jews*. These proceedings aroused Pegolotti's wrath, so that, although he was one of the Bardi firm, he made great and successful efforts to have the same privilege of franchise extended to the rest of the Florentines (1324). Thus, their common interests being promoted no less by the energy of individuals than by that of their government, these merchants continued to make advance in the East, and

stir the Pisans to greater envy. In fact, the latter decided in 1343 to reduce the exemptions allowed on Florentine merchandise, decreeing that goods only to the value of 200,000 florins might pass untaxed through their city; all the rest being charged two *soldi* the *lira*—*i.e.*, at the rate of 10 per cent. This left the Florentines no choice save to make war, or find some mode of avoiding the Pisan highway. To prove that their trade was not altogether at the mercy of Pisa, they preferred the second alternative. By making treaty with the Siennese, they obtained the concession of Porto Talamone, and at great expense, and in the teeth of many difficulties, finally succeeded in making it a vast emporium for their wares. The road to Talamone was long and inconvenient; but the Pisans, soon perceiving that they had done greater damage to themselves than to Florence, and that although they might inflict annoyance on the latter, there was no hope of destroying its trade, were therefore presently reduced to permit the free passage of merchandise. Accordingly the Florentines felt braced to more extensive enterprise in the Levant.[1]

The Egyptian route was the easiest and most direct for trading purposes; but sultan and califs barred the road to Christians. The Venetians alone, from having concluded treaties, it was said, "in the holy name of God and Mahomet," had made some way in that country to the jealous exclusion of all other Italians, who therefore usually travelled by Constantinople and the Black Sea, where they, and more especially the Genoese, had founded some populous and flourishing cities. Farther on, by the Sea of Azoff, a mile or so from the mouth of the Don, stood the town of Tana (Azov), a great business centre for traders from Russia, Arabia, Persia, Armenia, Mogul, and Southern China; and the chief place of exchange

[1] Ammirato, *ad annum;* Pagnini, loc. cit.

for Eastern and Western products. The Italians brought silk or woollen fabrics, oil, wine, pitch, tar, and common metals, and bartered them for precious stones, pearls, gold, spices, sweetmeats, sugar, Eastern tissues of silk, wool, or cotton, raw silk, goatskins, dye-woods, and likewise for Eastern slaves of either sex, who were to be seen in Italy down to the end of the fifteenth century.[1] All this varied commerce, originally started by Amalfi and other southern states, was afterwards carried on by the Venetians, Genoese, and Pisans. The argosies of those republics traversed all parts of the Archipelago, the Bosphorus, and the Black Sea. Italian was spoken in all the harbours of the East, where, besides Italian banks, workshops, and factories, there were cities founded and inhabited solely by Italians, with buildings in the Genoese or Venetian style, but where Italian, and especially Venetian, architecture became modified by Oriental influences. A great number of Genoese were settled in those parts. To give some idea of the naval strength of Venice, it will be enough to say that during the Crusade of 1202 that Republic equipped a fleet able to convey 4,500 horsemen, 9,000 squires, 30,000 infantry, and stores for nine months. Their galleys, never less than 80 feet in length, sometimes measured 110 by 70 in width, and in the fifteenth century were forty-five in number, with a total of 11,000 seamen. At the same time they also possessed 3,000 other vessels of from ten to one hundred tons, with 17,000 men, and 300 big ships with 8,000 men. In all, therefore, 3,345 vessels, with 36,000 seamen,[2] a strength that seems positively

[1] This led some writers to believe that slavery still existed in Italy many centuries after it had disappeared. A praiseworthy article on this theme, by Signor Salvatore Bongi, was published in the *Nuova Autologia*, anno I. No. 6.

[2] *Vide* the Speech of Tommaso Mocenigo, so often reproduced by chroniclers and historians; Pagnini, "Della Decima," vol. ii. p. 7 and fol.; Romanin, "Storia documentata di Venezia," vol. ii. pp. 156–7.

incredible, when we remember that the 'Serenissima' Republic of Venice was a city built on the sandbanks of the lagoons; that the entire management of its policy and trade was in the hands of men born within the narrow bounds of those lagoons. Accordingly we may imagine how great was the united strength of all the maritime republics, and how signal the courage of the Florentines in competing with them so obstinately for the Levantine trade.

Before launching a single galley, the Florentines had already established many houses and banks in every place, and contrived to introduce their merchandise in all the principal Eastern ports. We not only find them doing a vast business at Tana with great energy and enterprise, but also pushing on thence to far remoter regions. Pegolotti minutely describes the route followed by them, their manner of travelling, and the time employed in it. They journeyed, he tells us, through Astracan (Gittarchan), to Saracanco (Sarai) on the Volga, thence by Organci in *Z*agataio,[1] not far from the Caspian Sea, and crossing Asia by many places of which the names cannot be identified with any known at this day, they penetrated as far as Gambaluc, or Gamulecco, the chief city of China, that is to say, the city of Pekin. They employed eight or ten months to go from Tana to Pekin. Thus a period of almost two years was required for the journey there and back and time of sojourn, and when we also calculate the voyage from Porto Pisano or Leghorn to Tana and back, it is plain that a Florentine bound for Pekin could rarely count on returning home within three years.[2]

[1] Urghanj, the chief city of Khwarezm, the country now called Khiva. New Urghanj, the present commercial capital of Khiva, is sixty miles from the ancient city.

[2] Balducci Pegolotti, in Pagnini's book. Colonel H. Yule's "Cathay, and the Way Thither, being a Collection of Mediæval Notices of China" (London, printed for the Hakluyt Society, 1866), is a very important work, includes a series of documents translated by the author, and is prefaced by a learned dissertation from his pen.

During the growth of this Eastern trade, carried on with such indomitable energy, amid difficulties of all kinds, the Florentines were always aiming at the command of the seaboard, and never losing sight of the necessity of having a port of their own. And when, by the capture of Pisa in 1406, that long-desired object was finally attained, a new era began for their commerce. All their business concerns became most rapidly extended, and the first half of the fifteenth century was the time in which their greatest wealth was accumulated. In 1421 they appointed "consuls of the sea," who were ordered to immediately build two wide-beamed merchant galleons (*galee di mercato*) and six narrow galleys, and to continue to launch one of either kind every six months, for the which purpose a monthly sum of one hundred florins was assigned from the revenues of the Pisan university. Accordingly Florence soon possessed a merchant fleet of eleven stout galleons and fifteen narrow galleys continually employed in the Eastern traffic by command of the Republic. All these vessels had strict sailing orders as to the course to be taken, the ports to be touched at, and the freight to be carried. Announcements of their departure and arrival were hung in the arcades of the New Market; and the vessels being chartered by private individuals, the government was enabled to keep the Eastern routes open to all, without any outlay. In 1422, when, as already related, the "galley florin" was coined, the Florentines, at the instance of one Taddeo Cenni, a merchant long established in Venice, despatched two envoys to Egypt to obtain the right of having a church, warehouses, dockmen, and porters of their own at Alexandria. The negotiation proving successful, in 1423 they instructed the "consuls of the sea" to appoint extra consuls at every port where their presence might be useful to Florentine trade. Some had been established for more or less time at Constanti-

nople, Pera (1339), and London (1402); but from this moment we find them at Alexandria, Majorca, Naples, and other ports in all directions. These consuls had offices and clerks of their own, interpreters, men-at-arms, and places of worship; and all their expenses, salary included, were deducted from the freight dues received by them.[1]

To fully understand to what extent and in what way the Florentines profited by the new conditions resulting from their conquest of Pisa, it is necessary to point out that this event not only marks the time of their highest commercial prosperity, and the beginning of their navy and merchant fleet, but also indicates the date of their first attention to nautical and astronomical studies. We gain another proof of their great intelligence and untiring activity when we see that their first efforts in a branch of learning of which they had no previous knowledge enabled them to initiate the era of scientific triumphs, opening with Paolo Toscanelli, the first inspirer of Christopher Columbus, continued by Amerigo Vespucci, and closing with Galileo Galilei and his imperishable school.

V.

The seven guilds, already described by us, were styled the greater guilds, as being those of most importance and having the chief trade and wealth of the State in their hands. Several of these guilds consisted, as we have seen, rather of different crafts banded together, than of a single branch of industry; they gave employment to many workers, gathered and made use of enormous funds. But Florence also possessed the so-called lesser guilds number-

[1] Pagnini, vol. ii. sec. i. K. Sieveking, "Geschichte von Florenz." This very brief but excellent work was published anonymously at Hamburg in 1834. It has furnished many of the details given in this chapter.

ing fourteen in all, namely : Linenmakers and Mercers, Shoemakers, Smiths, Salters, Butchers and Slaughterers, Wine-dealers, Innkeepers, Harnessmakers, Leatherdressers, Armourers, Ironmongers, Masons, Carpenters, Bakers.[1]

Certain smaller Florentine crafts had also obtained great repute in Italy : for instance, that of the wood and stone carvers, who were esteemed as some of the best in the world. In all work demanding any share of artistic ability the Tuscans stood unrivalled. Thus the Florentine moulders of waxen images were considered to have incomparable skill, and we even find this remarked by the chronicler Dei. But neither the carvers nor the wax moulders formed an association, and were artists rather than artizans. But, leaving this question aside, the lesser guilds, although numerous and energetic, failed to achieve any noteworthy influence. Their difference from the greater guilds mainly lay in the fact that, being solely concerned with the local trade of the Republic, they were confined to a very limited field of business and enterprise, while the others engaged in the trade with the East and the West, were enabled to attain a high position even in politics, and to finally become masters of the State.

Looking back on the period in which the greater guilds rose to power, we shall see that they simultaneously held in their grasp the commerce, wealth, and government of the Florentine Republic. We shall also readily understand the enormous energy they must have displayed in order to use politics as a means for increasing the opulence that, in the existing conditions of Italy, had become the chief strength of our communes. The Florentine merchants, having long divined that the future would belong to them, were always the firmest supporters of the Guelph party against the Imperial Ghibellinism of

[1] The first five were frequently joined to the greater guilds, which were then increased to twelve.

the nobles and had vowed eternal hatred to the latter. We may now imagine Florence as a huge house of business, situated in the centre of Tuscany, and surrounded by others all competing with it in the race for success. International law and equity were unknown to the Middle Ages: hence when any State felt envious of its neighbour, the obvious course to adopt was to prohibit that neighbour from traversing its territory, and exact unbearably heavy dues from the rival it feared. Accordingly, the Republic of Florence, being the object of still fiercer jealousy on account of the continual increase of its commerce, and lacking room to breathe, as it were, without access to the sea, would have been speedily reduced to impotence had it not resisted its neighbours by force of arms. Hence, the necessity of defending its existence involved the State in an uninterrupted series of wars, invariably terminated by treaties of commerce, in which the unfailing subtlety of the Florentines always won the advantage.

We have seen from the beginning how Florence combated the neighbouring barons in order to secure the progress of its dawning trade, and subsequently obtained a passage through the Mugello for its increased traffic with Romagna and Lombardy. Later on, we have seen it engaged in fiercer struggles, and, after many vicissitudes, subduing almost all the Ghibelline cities of Tuscany, as, for instance, Volterra, Sienna, and Arezzo. And when inquiring why Florence should have remained so obstinately Guelph, even in the face of Papal threats, and repeating the same question Farinata put to Dante—

> "Dimmi, perchè quel popolo è si empio
> Incontro a' miei in ciascuna sua legge?" [1]

[1] "Inferno," Canto x.

the invariable reply has been that in addition to political motives of a more general nature, it must be kept in mind that the plutocracy now risen to power had first attained wealth by doing its chief business with Rome. Sienna, Arezzo, and Volterra being on the road and closer to Rome, were doomed to defeat in any competition with Florence.

Then, as soon as the Republic had secured its hold on Roman affairs and the Lombard trade, we saw its irresistible need of access to the sea, and that a war of extermination with Pisa had become altogether inevitable. To suppose that this prolonged, constantly renewed and sanguinary conflict was solely caused by a blind instinctive hatred of Pisa, when other and more serious reasons were so plainly existent, would be to deny the evidence of facts. From beginning to end it was simply the clash of violently opposed interests. The Pisans were perfectly aware that to yield a free passage to the power already commanding the chief trade in the interior of Italy—the power that, without having as yet a single galley afloat, had already made its way to all the harbours of the East—the power so persistently struggling for absolute supremacy in Tuscany—could only lead to their own lasting subjection. Therefore they resisted to the utmost of their strength. Their resources were undoubtedly great, and as many other Italians were equally hostile to the supremacy of Florence, the latter could never have succeeded in reducing the Pisans, had it not constantly employed the shrewdest devices in addition to its efforts in the field. In fact there is no better proof of the political ability of the Florentines than their mode of conducting this war and the means they employed to attain the object that, throughout the whole course of their history, had been their chief and invariable aim. We find them steadfast in their friendship to Lucca, and always prompt to succour that city at all

costs, because Lucca was never well disposed to the Pisans, and might prove a most useful ally in any campaign against them. So, too, we always find Florence on good terms with Genoa, and avoiding every risk of giving offence to a power that was Pisa's natural rival on the seas. Indeed, the Florentines always did their best to foster that rivalry, inasmuch as without an ally strong enough to assist them by crushing Pisa's power by sea, they could never hope to overthrow it by land. And at last the Pisans were defeated by the Genoese in the naval battle of Meloria (August 6, 1284). From that day the conquest of Pisa by the Florentines, although still to be long contested, was a foregone conclusion, and from that moment also their friendship for the Genoese began to lose warmth. While desiring assistance in overcoming Pisa, they wished to avoid aggrandising the power of a Ghibelline republic, already very mighty on the sea. Accordingly, after having so furiously attacked and enfeebled Pisa, we find them aiding that state to withstand the Genoese, until the moment came when the latter having abandoned the idea of conquering Pisa, they could successfully undertake its conquest on their own account.

With equal sagacity they pursued the same course in the years during which they were menaced by the powerful Dukes of Milan who sought to become masters of all Italy, and also when threatened from the south by the enmity of King Ladislaus of Naples. The art of stirring division among their foes, of supporting the weaker party against overbearing neighbours, of constantly contriving to rouse half Italy against every potentate risen to sufficient strength to be a terror to their own Republic, was the invariable means by which Florence maintained her independence in the midst of States who were losing their liberty, and in the midst of the numerous and formidable foes pressing about her on all sides. And

this successful policy was the work of the greater guilds, or rather of the prosperous trading class (*popolani grassi*).

These mercantile aristocrats ruled the Republic with so much energy and zeal, precisely because the aggrandisement of Florence conduced at the same time to the increase of their own wealth and commerce. Thus a city whose population was seldom more than 100,000, and often shrank far below that number, and whose narrow territory was surrounded by so many enemies, was enabled to become a State feared by the rest of Italy, and respected throughout Europe. These Florentine merchants were so jealous of their liberty as to deem no sacrifice too vast for its preservation, and were neither bewildered nor daunted by any danger, even when their trade was at stake. In fact, although so obstinately Guelph, and connected with Rome by so many commercial interests and ties, we find them ready to combat the Pope himself, when he made attacks on their liberty, and see them giving the name of the *Eight Saints* to the magistrates charged to conduct the campaign against Gregory XI. (1376). In the like manner we find them carrying on a war with the Visconti of Milan at a yearly cost of millions of florins, without the resources of the Republic being exhausted, or the courage of its rulers worn out.

VI.

Nevertheless, it would be an error to suppose that the domination of the greater guilds was assured and uncontested in the interior, at least, of the city. On the day when the scheme was first mooted, in the Calimala court, of placing these guilds at the head of the government, they speedily recognised that the possibility of success was solely owed to the fact of their having fought and conquered the nobles with the help of the lesser arts.

Hence, on the one hand, they had to face their natural and inveterate foes, the survivors of the feudal order, and on the other the lesser guilds coveting a share in the government which they had helped to establish. Thus the Republic comprised three classes of citizens and three separate parties. It is true that the greater guilds constituted by far the stronger of the three factions, but the others might become, if united, a very formidable opposition. And their union was no impossible contingency.

The difference, in fact, between the greater and lesser guilds was not merely one of degree as regarded their respective wealth and power; what divided them was the diversity of interests urging them to pursue an opposite policy. The wool-dresser or silk merchant was always ready to sacrifice his last florin, provided the Republic could gain possession of Leghorn or Porto Pisano. Accordingly he invariably kept a strict watch on the policy of Lucca and Genoa, to prevent them from making friendly advances to the Pisans. The Florentine banker was anxious that his Republic should always possess skilful ambassadors and consuls, able to supply full details of all that occurred in Rome, Antwerp, or Caffa, and impede the Siennese, Genoese, Venetians, and Lombards from gaining too much influence in those cities. Where any question of this kind was concerned the members of the greater guilds were always disposed to promote hostilities, no matter how prolonged, expensive, or dangerous, and to subject both themselves and the State to unlimited sacrifices. But financial and political interests weighed little with the blacksmiths, masons, carpenters, and other members of the fourteen lesser guilds, which nevertheless formed so considerable a part of the Florentine population. It mattered far more to them that Florence should be inhabited by rich and splendid gentry; that sumptuous palaces, villas, and monumental churches should have to

be built; that there should be a continual increase of luxury and good living among the citizens of rank and wealth, by whom they earned their subsistence. Warfare, on the contrary, put a check upon luxury, and the greater guilds were always issuing decrees against it, precisely on account of the exigences of the wars they so constantly had on hand. Hence the poorer classes detested the opulent burghers, whom they had helped to raise to power, who had subsequently excluded them, as well as the nobles, from the government, and who, while accumulating untold millions, often lived in the city on a footing of Spartan frugality; the men daily promulgating new edicts against female luxury in dress; forbidding the use of gold and silver ornaments, prohibiting all lavish expenditure for entertainments or wedding banquets, even going so far as to limit the number and choice of viands, and exclude gold and silver plate from festive tables; but who, nevertheless, were always very ready to squander millions in attacks on the Pisans, the King of Naples, the Visconti of Milan, or even for a church, or an additional consul at Caffa or Pera. This difference of temper generated party hatred. Nor should it be omitted that some of the bitterest outcries against the greater guilds came from the women of Florence, who, being naturally opposed to warfare, and addicted to extravagance, objected to the vexatious restrictions imposed by law, while yet contriving to evade them with indescribable ingenuity.[1]

[1] Franco Sacchetti tells us that while he was a member of the government the magistrates of the Republic never succeeded in enforcing the laws against luxury. One of them, having been severely reprimanded on this score and threatened with dismissal from office, gives the following account of the devices by which Florentine women evaded the regulations established by law:

"*Signori miei*,—All my life I have sought to acquire reason; and now, when methought I knew something, I find I know nothing; inasmuch as when searching for forbidden ornaments, according to your orders, the women bring forward arguments of a kind never found by me in any law; and among others I will quote these: There comes a woman with an

It is very easy to realise how good an opportunity this afforded the nobles of gaining the favour of the populace by stirring these germs of discord. They exercised no trade, lived on their revenues, but spent freely and lavishly in Florence. Accordingly, whenever engaged in fresh attempts to seize the government, or preserve their remaining share in it, they always allied themselves with the mob that lived—or at least believed itself to live—solely at their expense, and roused its resentment against the *popolani grassi*—or well-to-do burghers—by dwelling on the fact that whereas all the guilds were equally engaged in trade and commerce, a considerable number of them had no share in the power exclusively monopolised by the rest. The democratic spirit was far too lively in Florence for these devices to assure the safety of the nobles, much less their return to power; but they had the effect of stirring the masses to a burning and irresistible thirst for power, and of awakening revolutionary passions in the mob. Thus, at the moment of finally losing their old supremacy in the city, the nobles achieved the revenge of bequeathing to Florence a prolonged inheritance of strife that kept the Republic divided, and hastened its fall.

In fact, when at last the lesser guilds obtained a share

embroidered trimming turned down over her hood, and the notary says, 'Give me your name, since you wear an embroidered trimming.' The good woman takes off this trimming, which is fastened to the hood by a pin, and, holding it in her hand, declares it is a garland. He goes to another woman and says, 'I find you have too many buttons on the front of your gown; you must not wear those buttons.' But she replies, 'Yes, Messere, I can, for these are not buttons, but bosses; and if you do not believe me, see, they have no shanks, and neither are there button-holes.' The notary passes on to another woman wearing ermine fur, saying to himself, 'What excuse can she allege for that? You wear ermine,' and he begins to write her name. The woman says, 'Do not write me down, for this is not ermine, but *lattizzi* fur.' Says the notary, 'What are these *lattizzi*?' 'They are animals. . . .' One of the magistrates says, 'We are trying to fight against a wall.' And another remarks, 'It were better to attend to affairs of more importance!'" (Novella, 137.)

in the government, they were never at one with the greater trades. Their hostility was continually shown in all councils, tribunals, and public gatherings ; and they sometimes resorted to the perilous means of inflaming the worst passions of the mob which, as usual, served as a ready tool for ambitious aims. In this way a spirit of anarchy was unloosed, leading first to the revolt of the Ciompi, then to the necessity of seeking a protector for the Republic, and finally to the rule of the Medici. But before arriving at these extremities, there were two centuries of struggle, during which Florentine affairs were almost invariably in the hands of the burghers. On several occasions the reins of power seemed to have slipped from their grasp, but they always managed to retain enough influence to secure the election of magistrates of their own choice. In this way victory was restored to them, and they again took possession of the government. When, on the other hand, the triumph of anarchy made it requisite to seek a protector, and this protector, summoned to the defence of the Republic, sided with the malcontents and tried to establish a tyranny, the burghers then contrived to unite every faction in the interest of their common freedom and reinstate the Republican government, thus giving it a fresh lease of life. By dint of incredible sagacity, daring, and steadfastness, they managed to struggle on amid a thousand dangers, both within and without the walls. Although plunged in perpetual conflict with those who desired peace and claimed ever wider rights ; although surrounded by most powerful external foes now attempting to destroy their trade, now their Republic, their energy and patriotism never wearied, never failed to be on the alert. It was a feverish time of unceasing stress and strain, and freedom, though always on the verge of annihilation, was kept alive for two centuries in the midst

of communities where it was perishing. And even as the burghers had managed to create all sorts of financial combinations for the increase of trade and multiplication of wealth, so they showed inexhaustible ingenuity in devising new schemes and institutions to prolong the life of their Republic.

In matters of foreign policy Florentine diplomats became so renowned for sagacity and quick-wittedness, that on certain points they enjoyed even higher repute than the famed ambassadors of Venice. The latter, in fact, with their old traditions of statecraft, pursued the invariable policy of a strong, calm and self-reliant government. Their strength was the outcome of the strength and wisdom of a republic commanding both fear and respect, and whose voice seemed to be heard in the speech of its envoys. Every Florentine ambassador exercised, on the contrary, a direct personal influence, due to his own sharpness of intellect, extraordinary knowledge of mankind, and marvellous aptitude for comprehending everything and making everything clearly understood. Undoubtedly the State acted in him and by him; but less because he served as its mouthpiece than because it had succeeded in evoking and training all his mental powers and rendering him an intelligent and independent personality. Florentine merchants, notaries, administrators, and diplomats were universally prized, and seemed at home in every corner of the globe. Hence it is said that one day Pope Boniface VIII., seeing that the ambassadors sent to him from different parts of the world were one and all Florentines, quietly remarked, "You Florentines are the fifth element in creation."

It was in the midst of these political conflicts, of this ferment of the human mind, that art and literature rose to such splendour, that the whole world was, as it were, illuminated by the radiance shed by Italian cities, and

shining most brightly from Florence. The far-reaching energy of this city of commerce and trade was felt almost everywhere; but even at points where this had failed to penetrate, the genius of Florentine literature and art seems to have asserted its power and initiated modern culture in Europe.

VII.

All this, however, was carried on in the face of continual and new dangers, threatening the very life of the Republic, and sometimes only to be averted by superhuman efforts. Memory instinctively carries us back to the Florence of old with its council and its Consuls, yearly taking the field united and agreed, for the purpose of abasing the nobles and clearing the highways for the march of its trade; and then, having reduced the hostile barons one by one, compelling them to live within the walls, subject to the equal pressure of republican laws;—to the times when the State could only overcome its more powerful neighbours by emancipating the slaves of the soil and granting political privileges to traders hitherto unpossessed of any such rights. On recalling those times, we easily recognise that they contained the germs of future greatness for the Commune that by dint of continual warfare succeeded in augmenting its resources in every direction. Later, however, things were radically changed, owing to many causes, and above all in consequence of the new method of warfare to which we have already alluded and which must now be more fully described.

Down to the fourteenth century republican armies were composed of foot soldiers, lightly equipped with sword, shield, and helmet, and some slight defensive armour for leg or breast. The horse were few in number and never decided the fate of a battle. All barbarian

armies had been composed much on the same plan, excepting those of the Huns and Moors, who were almost always mounted, and of the Byzantines, whose cavalry had frequently defeated the Goths. Frederic Barbarossa's Italian campaigns had been chiefly carried on by infantry. and withstood by the infantry of our communes, who could then turn all able-bodied citizens into soldiers at a moment's notice. But in the campaigns of Frederic II., Manfred and Charles of Anjou, a new method of war had been imported into Italy from Germany and France. The Florentines had learnt this to their cost at the battle of Montaperti, when their numerous army was routed by the charge of a few German horse. From that moment the issue of all Italian battles began to be decided by heavy cavalry or by men-at-arms. The mounted soldier was clad in steel from head to foot, although not yet, as at the close of the fifteenth century, encased, together with his steed, in such ponderous armour, that, once fallen, neither could rise from the ground without help. Armed with a very long lance, the horseman could overthrow the foot soldier before the latter could approach him with his short sword. Besides, this weapon never served to pierce the armour either of man or horse; and the arrows of the bowmen were equally useless. Accordingly, a few hundred men-at-arms pushed forward like a movable and impregnable fortress into the midst of a host of infantry sufficed to rout it in a very short time. This state of things lasted until the invention of powder and firearms produced a radical change in the condition of the Italian communes. For mounted troops required much training and great expenditure. It was not enough to maintain great arsenals, to create and train a new breed of horses, but every trooper had also to be kept in steady practice, devote his whole time to warfare, and keep two or three squires

continuously drilled and employed. These squires carried all the armour and weapons and led the knight's charger, which was only used in battle. Only then, too, were knight and steed in full harness, otherwise both would have been exhausted in the hour of danger. Hence it was impossible for our republics to raise cavalry, seeing that citizens, earning their living by trade and commerce, could not forsake their daily work to acquire the art of war. Therefore, soldiering became a regular trade, and all choosing it for their career speedily began to put a price on their swords. Thus from the closing years of the thirteenth century we begin to find *soldiers* of various nationalities—Catalans, Burgundians, Germans, and other foreign horse—in the ranks of republican armies, and the number of these mercenaries was continually on the increase.

Gradually, also, tradesmen were obliged to recognise that they had become personally useless in the field. Accordingly, whenever the republics were threatened with attack, they no longer ventured to give battle without hiring some captain with a band of foreign horse. Italian valour rapidly lost its prestige, and "Companies of Adventure"—soon to be the cause of our direst calamities—began to be formed. Later on, it is true that when Alberico da Barbiano, Attendolo Sforza, Braccio da Montone, and others adopted the same career, they rivalled and even surpassed the foreign adventurers, who had now often to yield the palm to Italian courage. Soon, in fact, many came from afar to learn the new art of war under these Italian captains whose skill first reduced it to a science. Nevertheless, few citizens of free states were able to devote their whole life to war. It was the nobles, the exiles, the unemployed—knowing no other trade—and the subjects of petty tyrants who joined the "Companies of Adventure." And whether

small bands or large, Italian or foreign, they invariably hastened the ruin of all our communes, and more especially of Florence. The continual wars in which this State was now engaged no longer served to foster the military spirit and energy of its people. Always compelled to rely on the help of foreign mercenaries, it soon lost all confidence in its own resources, the which therefore rapidly declined. A campaign simply implied some financial operation, or the levying of fresh taxes to furnish sufficient capital for the hire of one of the captains of adventure, who always closed with the highest bid. The money found, it was often enough to send it to the State's surest and most powerful ally, who undertook to complete the affair by engaging the captain best able to hire the largest number of men. So the chief thing was to know how to gain friends and excite enemies against the foe, and in this the Florentines always showed masterly skill. But these devices were no proof of military capacity. The most important personages despatched by them to the seat of war were commissioners charged to superintend the general proceedings, the administration of the army, and the political object of the campaign, and although we sometimes find these commissioners suddenly transformed into captains, taking command of the forces and deciding the fate of a battle with singular daring, their functions were always civil and diplomatic rather than military.

It is easy to foresee the final results of this method with regard to the future of the Republic, and the morals of its inhabitants. The stout burghers at the head of the government were engaged in the continual practice of cunning and craft. It was requisite to show adroitness in the council chamber ; to thwart the nobles; to remain constantly on the alert to prevent the populace from growing unruly, while persuading it to furnish funds to

carry on wars which were indispensable to secure the safety and prosperity of the foreign trade. Hence, still greater subtlety was needed in diplomatic negotiations to avoid being isolated, and to continually maintain the equilibrium of Italian States in the way most advantageous for the Republic. Even actual warfare being now reduced, as we have seen, to a financial operation, had come to be a fresh proof of ingenuity. There were no longer any of those vast sacrifices of citizens' blood and citizens' lives which serve towards the continued regeneration of a people, no longer any deeds of open and generous violence. And at times when the rich burghers were not absorbed in politics, they and all the rest of the citizens were devoted heart and soul to commerce, employing their leisure moments in the study of Tacitus, Virgil, or Homer, kept ready to hand under their counters. But, invariably, it was only the intelligence that was kept always in training, while the nobler faculties remained strangled and atrophied by the constant use of cunning and trickery. This was destined to lead, sooner or later, to the inevitable decay of the Republic's moral and political life, and to the decline of the highest mental culture. If the manner in which wars were planned and conducted caused fatal results, no less fatal were the ulterior consequences of victorious campaigns. For the hired troops once paid off, changed from friends into foes, and instantly sought to sell their services to some other employer. Failing to find one, and therefore receiving no pay, they dispersed in armed bands, ravaging town and country, by a species of military brigandage. Generally, it was found requisite to come to terms with them, and bribe them to keep the peace.

But the most important point to be noted at this juncture is that the conquest of fresh territory, although become an absolute necessity to the Republic, now began

to be a serious danger and the source of future calamities. During the Middle Ages the Italian Commune had been a fertile cause of progress; but as its possessions outside the walls began to increase, it proved wholly powerless to convert the free city into what we call a State without working radical changes in its constitution. In fact, even in Florence, the most democratic of our communes, citizens were only to be found within the circuit of the walls. Laws were framed to ameliorate the condition of the territory outside and to abolish serfdom there, but no one contemplated endowing inhabitants of the *contado* with political rights. The title of citizens always remained, as it were, a privilege only granted to a minority, even of dwellers within the walls, and was never extended to the people at large. Whenever a new city was conquered and subjected to the Republic, it was governed more or less harshly; allowed to retain more or fewer local privileges; sometimes even permitted to retain a republican form of government, subject to the authority of a Podestà, captain, or commissary, and paying the taxes imposed by them; but its inhabitants never enjoyed the freedom of the City, nor were their representatives by any chance admitted to the councils or political offices of Florence. Accordingly, as the State became enlarged by fresh conquests, the cluster of citizens monopolising the government, and already very limited in number, sank to a still smaller minority compared with the ever-increasing population subject to their rule. Similarly to all other republicans of the Middle Ages, the Florentines were altogether unable to conceive the idea of a State governed with a view to the general welfare. On the contrary, the prosperity and grandeur of Florence formed the one object and aim to which every other consideration had to be subservient. Nor had the lower classes and populace, who were always clamouring for increased freedom, any

different or wider views on the subject. Their ideas, indeed, being restricted in a narrower circle, were even more prejudiced, as their passions were blinder. Consequently it was considered at that time a greater calamity to be subjugated by a fellow republic than by a monarchy; inasmuch as princes brought their tyranny to bear equally on all alike, and thus, at any rate as regarded politics, the chief majority of the conquered suffered less injury. When Florence, however, by achieving the long-desired conquest of Pisa, at last became mistress of the sea, and witnessed the rapid increase of her commerce, she discovered that the annexation of a great and powerful republic, full of life and strength and possessed of so large a trade, brought her none of the advantages which might have ensued from a union of a freer kind with an equal distribution of political rights. The chief citizens of Pisa and all the wealthier families left the country, preferring to live in Lombardy, France, or even in Sicily under the Aragonese, where at least they enjoyed civil equality, rather than remain in their own city subject to the harsh and tyrannous rule of Florentine shopkeepers. The commerce and industry of Pisa, her navy, her merchant-fleet, all vanished when freedom fell; while her *Studio*, or university, one of the old glories of Italy, and afterwards reconstituted by the Medici, was done away with, and the city soon reduced to a state of squalid desolation. All conquered cities suffered this fate; those once of the richest and most powerful in the days of their freedom being treated with still greater harshness than the rest.[1] This makes it easy to understand why, when

[1] Guicciardini, "Considerazioni sui Discorsi del Machiavelli" (Opere inedite, vol. i., Barbéra, Florence). Full confirmation of the above statements are to be found in this work. In treating of chap. xii. bk. i., where Machiavelli charges the Popes with having prevented the unity of Italy, the author qualifies his approval of the remark by adding: "But I feel uncertain whether it were a good or an ill chance for this province

Florence was in danger, all conquered cities in which life was not altogether extinguished invariably seized the opportunity to try to regain their independence, and always preferred a native or foreign tyrant to cowering beneath the yoke of a republic that refused to learn from experience the wisdom of changing its policy. Nor could it have effected such change without radically altering its whole constitution and manner of existence.

Thus, in accumulating riches and power, Florence was only multiplying the causes of her approaching and unavoidable decline. The Commune seemed increasingly incapable of giving birth to the modern State, and accordingly, when its chief support, commerce, began to decay, the strength of the burghers was sapped, and the oppressed multitude, now a formidable majority, speedily looked to monarchical rule for their relief. Thus the Medici were enabled to attain supremacy in the name of freedom, and with the support of people and populace. Thus, likewise, by violence, or fraud, or by both combined, the communes of Italy were all reduced to principalities; and wherever, from exceptional causes, the republican order still lingered on for a while, it was only as a shadow of its former self, and no longer rendering any of the advantages for which it had been originally designed. Populations which had failed to establish equality by means of free institutions, were now forced to learn the lesson of equality beneath the undiscriminating oppression of a despotic prince. Signories formed the necessary link

to escape being absorbed in a kingdom; for although to be subject to a republic might prove a glory to the name of Italy and a happiness to the dominant city, it could only bring calamity to all other cities, seeing that, oppressed by the latter's shadow, they were unable to rise to any greatness, it being the wont of republics 'to give no share of the fruits of their independence and power to any save their own citizens. . . . This reason does not hold good in a monarchy wherein all subjects enjoy more equality, and therefore we behold France and many other provinces living contentedly under a king.'"

of transition between the mediæval commune and the modern state. For these Signories traced a way towards the just administration and method pursued by the vast kingdoms then in course of formation on the continent of Europe, and which also remained absolute and despotic monarchies until the French revolution effected in town, country, and throughout every class that work of social emancipation which the Italian communes had so admirably initiated, but had never learnt to extend beyond the circuit of their walls.

Florence maintained a prolonged resistance, but finally shared the fate of her fellow republics.

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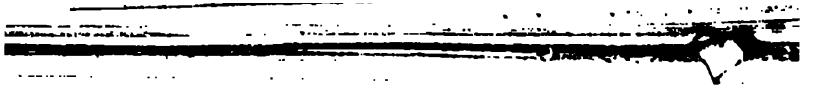
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